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DIALOGUES

CONCERNING

ELOQUENCE IN GENERAL;

AND,

PARTICULARLY THAT KIND WHICH IS PROPER FOR
THE PULPIT.

BY M. DE FENELON,

Archbishop of Cambray.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, AND ILLUSTRATED
WITH NOTES AND QUOTATIONS.

BY WILLIAM STEVENSON, M. A.

Rector of Morningthorpe in Norfolk.

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PREFACE.

BY THE CHEVALIER RAMSAY.

BOTH the ancients and the moderns have treated of eloquence, with different views, and in different ways; as logicians, as grammarians, and as critics: but we still wanted an author who should handle this delicate subject as a philosopher, and a christian: and this the late Archbishop of Cambray has done in the following dialogues.

In the ancient writers we find many solid precepts of rhetoric, and very just rules laid down with great exactness: but they are oftentimes too numerous, too dry; and, in fine, rather curious than useful. Our author reduces the essential rules of this wonderful art, to these three points; proving, painting, and moving the passions.

To qualify his orator for proving, or establishing any truth, he would have him a philosopher; who knows how to enlighten the understanding, while he moves the passions;

and to act at once upon all the powers of the mind; not only by placing the truth in so clear a light as to gain attention and assent; but likewise by moving all the secret springs of the soul, to make it love that truth it is convinced of. In one word, our author would have his orator's mind filled with bright, useful truths, and the most exalted views.

That he may be able to paint, or describe well, he should have a poetic kind of enthusiasm; and know how to employ beautiful figures, lively images, and bold touches, when the subject requires them. But this art ought to be entirely concealed: or, if it must appear, it should seem to be a just copy of nature. Wherefore our author rejects all such false ornaments as serve only to please the ear, with harmonious sounds; and the imagination, with ideas that are more gay and sparkling, than just and solid.

To move the passions he would have an orator set every truth in its proper place; and so connect them that the first may make way for the second; and the next support the former: so that the discourse shall gradually advance in strength and clearness, till the hear-

ers perceive the whole weight and force of the truth. And then he ought to display it in the liveliest images ; and both in his words and gesture use all those affecting movements that are proper to express the passions he would excite.

It is by reading the ancients that we must form our taste, and learn the art of eloquence in all its extent. But seeing that some of the ancients themselves have their defects, we must read them with caution and judgment. Our learned author distinguishes the genuine beauties of the purest antiquity, from the false ornaments used in after ages ; he points out what is excellent, and what is faulty, both in sacred and profane authors ; and shews us that the eloquence of the Holy Scripture, in many places, surpasses that of the Greeks and Romans, in native simplicity, liveliness, grandeur, and in every thing that can recommend truth to our assent and admiration.

DIALOGUES

CONCERNING ELOQUENCE.



THE FIRST DIALOGUE, BETWEEN *A.* AND *B.* AND *C.*

A. WELL, Sir, I suppose you have been hearing the sermon to which you would have carried me. I have but very little curiosity that way, and am content with our parish minister.

B. I was charmed with my preacher. You had a great loss, Sir, in not hearing him. I have hired a pew, that I may not miss one of his Lent sermons. O! he is a wonderful man. If you did but once hear him, you could never bear any other.

A. If it be so, I am resolved never to hear him. I would not have any one preacher give me a distaste of all others; on the contrary, I should choose one that will give me a relish and respect for the word of God, as may dispose me the more to hear it preached every where. But since I have lost so much by not hearing this fine discourse you are so pleased with, you may make up part of that loss, if you will be so kind as to communicate to us what you remember of it.

B. I should only mangle the sermon, by endeavouring to repeat any part of it. There were an hundred beauties in it that one cannot recollect, and which none but the preacher himself could display.

A. Well ; but let us at least know something of his design, his proofs, his doctrine, and the chief truths he enlarged on. Do you remember nothing ? Was you unattentive ?

B. Far from it : I never listened with more attention and pleasure.

C. What is the matter then, do you want to be entreated ?

B. No : but the preacher's thoughts were so refined, and depended so much on the turn and delicacy of his expressions, that though they charmed me while I heard them, they cannot be easily recollected ; and though one could remember them, if they be expressed in other words, they would not seem to be the same thoughts ; but lose all their grace and force.

A. Surely, Sir, these beauties must be very fading, if they vanish thus upon the touch, and will not bear a review. I should be much better pleased with a discourse which has more body in it, and less spirit ; that things might make a deeper impression on the mind, and be more easily remembered. What is the end of speaking but to persuade people, and to instruct them in such truths as they can retain ?

C. Now you have begun, Sir, I hope you will go on with this useful subject.

A. I wish I could prevail with you, Sir, to give us some general notion of the elegant harangue you heard.

B. Since you are so very urgent, I will tell you what I can recollect of it. The text was this,* 'I have eaten ashes like bread.' Now could any one make a happier choice of a text for Ash-wednesday! he shewed us that, according to this passage, ashes ought this day to be the food of our souls, then in his preamble he ingeniously interwove the story of Artemesia, with regard to her husband's ashes. His† transition to his Ave Maria was very artful; and his division was extremely ingenious: you shall judge of it. 1. 'Though this dust, said he, be a sign of repentance, it is a principle of felicity: 2. Though it seems to humble us, it is really a source of glory: 3. And though it represents death, it is a remedy that gives immortal life.' He turned

* Psalm cii. 9.

† The Romish preachers, in the preamble of their sermons, address themselves to the Virgin Mary; and are oftentimes very artful in their transition to it, as our author observes. We have a remarkable example of this in one of the greatest French orators, M. L'Esprit Flechier, bishop of Nismes, who seems to be oftner than once alluded to in these dialogues. In his panegyric on S. Joseph he introduces his Ave Maria thus, —Every thing seems to concur to the glory of my subject; the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, and Mary, are concerned in it; why may I not hope for the assistance of one of them, the grace of the other, and the intercessions of the Virgin? To whom we will address ourselves in those words that the angel said to her, and which S. Joseph no doubt often repeated; Hail! Mary, &c. *Panegyriques*, vol. i. p. 71.

this division various ways, and every time he gave it a new lustre by his antitheses. The rest of his discourse was not less bright and elegant; the language was polite; the thoughts new; the periods were harmonious; and each of them concluded with some surprising turn. He gave such just characters of common life, that his hearers found their various pictures faithfully drawn: and his exact anatomy of all the passions equalled the maxims of the great ROCHEFOUCAULT; in short, I think it was a master-piece. But, Sir, I shall be glad to know your opinion of it.

A. I am unwilling to tell you my thoughts, or to lessen your esteem, of it. We ought to reverence the word of God; to improve ourselves by all the truths that a preacher explains; and avoid a critical humour, lest we should lessen the authority of the sacred function.

B. You have nothing to fear, Sir, at present. It is not out of curiosity that I ask your opinion; but because I would have clear notions of it; and such solid instructions as may not only satisfy myself, but be of use to others; for you know my profession obliges me to preach. Give us your thoughts therefore, without any reserve; and do not be afraid either of contradicting or offending me.

A. Since you will have it so, I must obey your commands. To be free then; I conclude, from your own account of this sermon, that it was a very sorry one.

B. Why so?

A. Why; can a sermon in which the scripture is falsely applied; a scrap of profane history is told after a dry, childish manner; and vain affectation of wit runs throughout the whole; can such a sermon be good?

B. By no means: but I do not think that the sermon I heard is of that sort.

A. Have patience, and I doubt not but you and I shall agree. When the preacher chose these words for his text, 'I have eaten ashes like bread,' ought he to have amused his audience with observing some kind of relation between the mere sound of his text, and the ceremony of the day? should he not first have explained the true sense of the words, before he applied them to the present occasion?

B. It had been better.

A. Ought he not therefore to have traced the subject a little higher, by entering into the true occasion and design of the Psalm; and explaining the context? Was it not proper for him to inquire whether the interpretation he gave of the words was agreeable to the true meaning of them, before he delivered his own sense to the people, as if it were the word of God?

B. He ought to have done so: but what fault was there in his interpretation?

A. Why, I will tell you. David (who was the author of the cii. Psalm) speaks of his own misfortunes: he tells us, that his enemies insulted him cruelly, when they saw him

in the dust, humbled at their feet, and reduced (as he poetically expresses it) to 'eat ashes like bread,' and 'to mingle his drink with weeping.' Now what relation is there between the complaints of David, driven from his throne, and persecuted by his son Absalom; and the humiliation of a christian, who puts ashes on his forehead, to remind him of his mortality, and disengage him from sinful pleasures? Could the preacher find no other text in scripture? Did Christ and his apostles, or the prophets, never speak of death, and the dust of the grave, to which all our pride and vanity must be reduced? Does not the scripture contain many affecting images of this important truth? Might he not have been content with the words of Genesis,* which are so natural and proper for this ceremony, and chosen by the church itself? Should a vain delicacy make him afraid of too often repeating a text that the Holy Spirit has dictated, and which the church appoints to be used every year? Why should he neglect such a pertinent passage, and many other places of scripture, to pitch on one that is not proper? This must flow from a depraved taste, and a fond inclination to say something that is new.

B. You grow too warm, Sir: supposing the literal sense of the text not to be the true meaning of it, the preacher's remarks might however be very fine and solid.

C. As for my part, I do not care whether

* Gen. iii. 19.

a preacher's thoughts be fine or not, till I am first satisfied of their being true. But, Sir, what say you to the rest of the sermon?

A. It was exactly of a piece with the text. How could the preacher give such misplaced ornaments to a subject in itself so terrifying; and amuse his hearers with an idle story of Artemesia's sorrow; when he ought to have alarmed them, and given them the most terrible images of death?

B. I perceive then you do not love turns of wit, on such occasions. But what would become of eloquence if it were stript of such ornaments? Would you confine every body to the plainness of country preachers? Such men are useful among the common people; but persons of distinction have more delicate ears; and we must adapt our discourses to their polite taste.

A. You are now leading me off from the point. I was endeavouring to convince you, that the plan of the sermon was ill laid; and I was just going to touch upon the division of it: but I suppose you already perceive the reason why I dislike it; for, the preacher lays down three quaint conceits for the subject of his whole discourse. When one chooses to divide a sermon, he should do it plainly, and give such a division as naturally arises from the subject itself, and gives a light and just order to the several parts; such a division as may be easily remembered, and at the same time help to connect and retain the whole;

in fine, a division that shews at once the extent of the subject, and of all its parts. But, on the contrary, here is a man who endeavours to dazzle his hearers, and puts them off with three points of wit, or puzzling riddles, which he turns and plies so dextrously, that they must fancy they saw some tricks of legerdemain. Did this preacher use such a serious, grave manner of address as might make you hope for something useful and important from him? But, to return to the point you proposed; did you not ask me whether I meant to banish eloquence from the pulpit?

B. Yes. I fancy that is your drift.

A. Think you so? pray what do you mean by eloquence?

B. It is the art of speaking well.

A. Has this art no other end, besides that of speaking well? Have not men some design in speaking? Or do they talk only for the sake of talking?

B. They speak to please, and to persuade others.

A. Pray let us carefully distinguish these two things. Men talk in order to persuade; that is certain: and too often they speak likewise to please others. But while one endeavours to please, he has another view; which, though more distant, ought to be his chief aim. A man of probity has no other design in pleasing others, than that he may the more effectually inspire them with the love of justice, and other virtues; by representing them

as most amiable. He who seeks to advance his own interest, his reputation, or his fortune, strives to please, only that he may gain the affection and esteem of such as can gratify his ambition, or his avarice : so that this very design of pleasing is still but a different manner of persuasion that the orator aims at ; for he pleases others to inveigle their affection ; that he may thereby persuade them to what advances his interest.

B. You cannot but own then that men often speak to please. The most ancient orators had this view. Cicero's orations plainly shew that he laboured hard for reputation : and who will not believe the same of Isocrates, and Demosthenes too ? All the panegyrists were more solicitous for their own honour, than for the fame of their heroes ; and they extolled a prince's glory to the skies, chiefly because they hoped to be admired for their ingenious manner of praising him. This ambition seems to have been always reckoned commendable both among the Greeks and the Romans : and such emulation brought eloquence to its perfection : it inspired men with noble thoughts and generous sentiments, by which the ancient republics were made to flourish. The advantageous light in which eloquence appeared in great assemblies, and the ascendant it gave the orator over the people, made it to be admired, and helped to spread polite learning. I cannot see indeed why such an emulation should be blamed even

among christian orators ; provided they did not shew an indecent affectation in their discourses, nor in the least enervate the precepts of the gospel. We ought not to censure what animates young people, and forms our greatest preachers.

A. You have here put several things together, which, if you please, Sir, we will consider separately ; and observe some method in inquiring what we ought to conclude from them. But let us above all things avoid a wrangling humour ; and examine the subject with calmness and temper, like persons who are afraid of nothing so much as of error, and let us place the true point of honour in a candid acknowledgment of our mistakes, whenever we perceive them.

B. That is the exact state of my mind ; or at least I judge it to be so ; and I entreat you to tell me when you find me transgressing this equitable rule.

A. We will not as yet talk of what relates to preachers ; for that point may be more seasonably considered afterwards. Let us begin with those orators whose examples you vouched. By mentioning Demosthenes and Isocrates together, you disparage the former ; for the latter was a lifeless declaimer, that busied himself in polishing his thoughts, and giving an harmonious cadence to his periods. He had a very* low and vulgar notion of elo-

* In the introduction of this very panegyric, that our author mentions, Isocrates says, Such is the nature of eloquence ;

quence; and placed almost the whole of it, in a nice disposal of his words. A man who employed ten or (as others say) fifteen years, in smoothing the periods of a panegyric, which was a discourse concerning the necessities of Greece, could give but a very small and slow relief to the republic, against the enterprises of the Persian king. Demosthenes spoke against Philip in a quite different manner. You may read the comparison that Dionysius Halicarnassius has made of these two orators, and see there the chief faults he observed in Isocrates; whose discourses are vainly gay and florid; and his periods adjusted with incredible pains, merely to please the ear: while, on the contrary,* Demosthenes moves, warms, and captivates the heart. He was too sensibly touched with the interest of his country, to mind the little glittering fancies that amused Isocrates. Every oration of De-

that it makes great things appear little; and small things to seem great; it can represent old things as new; and new things as if they were old; and that therefore he would not decline a subject that others had handled before him, but would endeavour to declaim better than they.—Upon which Longinus (§ 38.) makes this judicious remark; that by giving such a character of eloquence, in the beginning of his panegyric, the orator in effect cautioned his hearers not to believe his discourse.

* In oratoribus vero, Græcis quidem, admirabile est quantum inter omnes unus excellat. Attamen cum esset Demosthenes, multi oratores magni, et clari fuerunt, et antea, fuerant, nec postea defecerunt. Cic. *Orat.* § 2.

Quid denique Demosthenes? non cunctos illos tenues et circumspectos [oratores] vi, sublimitate, impetu, cultu, compositione superavit? non insurgit locis? non figuris gaudet? non translationibus nitet? non oratione ficta dat carentibus vocem?—*Quintil.* lib. xii. cap. 10.

*2

mosthenes is a close chain of reasoning, that represents the generous notions of a soul who disdains any thought that is not great. His discourses gradually increase in force by greater light and new reasons; which are always illustrated by bold figures and lively images. One cannot but see that he has the good of the republic entirely at heart; and that nature itself speaks in all his transports: for his artful address is so masterly, that it never appears. Nothing ever equalled the force and vehemence of his discourses. Have you never read the remarks that Longinus made on them, in his treatise of the Sublime?

B. No: is not that the treatise that Mr. Boileau translated? Do you think it fine?

A. I am not afraid to tell you that I think it surpasses Aristotle's Rhetoric; which, though it be a very solid tract, is yet clogged with many dry precepts, that are rather curious, than fit for practice; so that it is more proper to point out the rules of art to such as are already eloquent, than to give us a just taste of rhetoric, and to form true orators. But Longinus in his discourse of the Sublime, intersperses among his precepts, many fine examples from the greatest authors, to illustrate them. He* treats of the Sublime in a

* Thee, bold Longinus! all the nine inspire,
And bless their critic with a poet's fire:
An ardent judge, who, zealous in his trust,
With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just:
Whose own example strengthens all his laws,
And is himself that great Sublime he draws.

Mr. Pope's Essay on Criticism, p. 45.

lofty manner, as his translator has judiciously observed: he warms our fancy, and exalts our mind; he forms our taste; and teaches us to distinguish what is either fine, or faulty, in the most famous ancient writers.

B. Is Longinus such a wonderful author? Did he not live in the days of Zenobia, and the emperor Aurelian?

A. Yes; you cannot but know their history.

B. Did not those days fall vastly short of the politeness of former ages? and can you imagine that an author who flourished in the declension of learning and eloquence had a better taste than Isocrates? I cannot believe it.

A. I was surprised myself, to find it so: but you need only read him, to be convinced of it. Though he lived in a very corrupted age, he formed his judgment upon the ancient models; and has avoided almost all the reigning faults of his own time; I say almost all, for I must own, he studied rather what is admirable, than what is useful; and did not consider eloquence as subservient to morality; nor apply it to direct the conduct of life. And in this he does not seem to have had such solid views as the ancient Greeks, and especially some of their philosophers. But we ought to forgive him a failing, for which Isocrates was far more remarkable, though he lived in a more refined age. And this defect ought the rather to be over-looked in a particular discourse, where Longinus

does not treat of what is proper to instruct men, but of what is apt to move and seize their passions. I choose to recommend this author, Sir, because he will help to explain my meaning to you. You will see what a glorious character he gives of Demosthenes, from whom he quotes several passages that are most sublime : he will likewise shew you those faults of Isocrates that I mentioned. If you be unwilling to take the trouble of becoming acquainted with these authors, by reading their works ; you may get a very just notion of them by consulting Longinus. Let us now leave Isocrates ; and talk of Demosthenes and Cicero.

B. You are for leaving Isoerates, because he is not for your purpose.

A. Let us go on then with Isocrates, since you are not yet convinced : and let us judge of his rhetoric by the rules of eloquence itself ; and by the sentiments of Plato, the most* eloquent writer among the ancients. Will you be determined by him ?

B. I will be determined by him, if he be in

* Sed ego neque illis assentiebar, neque harum disputationum inventori, & principi longe omnium in dicendo gravissimo, et *Eloquentissimo Platoni*, cujus tum Athenis cum Carneade diligentius legi Gorgiam quo in libro, hoc maxime admirabar Platonem, quod mihi in oratoribus irridendis, ipse esse *Orator Summus* videbatur. *Cic. de Orat. lib. 1. § 2.* Quid denique Demosthenes ? — non illud iurjurandum per cassos in Marathone ac Salamine propugnatores reipublicæ, satis manifesto docet præceptorem ejus Platonem fuisse ? quem ipsum num Asianum appellabimus plerumque instinctis divino spiritu vatibus comparandum ?

Quint. lib. xii. cap. 10. See Longinus, § xiii.

the right: but I never resign my judgment implicitly to any author.

A. Remember this rule: it is all that I ask of you. And if you do not let some fashionable prejudices bias your judgment, reason will soon convince you of the truth. I would therefore have you believe neither Isocrates, nor Plato: but judge of them both, by clear principles. Now I suppose you will grant that the chief end of eloquence is to persuade men to embrace truth and virtue.

B. I am not of your mind: this is what I have already denied.

A. I will endeavour to prove it then. Eloquence, if I mistake not, may be considered in three respects: as the art of enforcing truth on people's minds, and of making them better: as an art indifferent in itself; which wicked men may use as well as good; and which may be applied to recommend injustice and error, as well as probity and truth: and, as an art which selfish men may use to ingratiate themselves with others; to raise their reputation, and make their fortune. Which of these ends do you admit of?

B. I allow of them all. What do you infer from this concession?

A. The inference will afterwards appear. Have patience a little; and be satisfied, if I say nothing but what is evidently true, till by gradual advances I lead you to the right conclusion. Of the three ends of eloquence, I now mentioned, you will undoubtedly prefer the first.

B. Yes : it is the best.

A. What think you of the second ?

B. I see what you drive at ; you are going into a fallacy. The second sort is faulty, because of the ill use the orator makes of his eloquence, to enforce error and vice. But still the rhetoric of a wicked man may be good in itself, though the use he makes of it be pernicious. Now we are talking of the nature and rules of eloquence ; not of the uses it should be applied to. Let us keep to the true state of the question.

A. If you will do me the favour to hear me a little, you will find that I have the point in dispute always in view. You seem then to condemn the second sort of eloquence : or, to speak without ambiguity, you condemn the* abuse of rhetoric.

B. Right. You now speak correctly, so far then we are agreed.

A. What say you of the third end of eloquence ; I mean the orator's endeavouring to please others by talking ; that he may raise his reputation or his fortune ?

* When I consider the means of happy living (says an eloquent writer) and the causes of their corruption, I can hardly forbear recanting what I said before ; and concluding, that eloquence ought to be banished out of all civil societies, as a thing fatal to peace and good manners. To this opinion I should wholly incline, if I did not find, that it is a weapon which may be as easily procured by bad men, as by good : and that if these only should cast it away, and those retain it ; the naked innocence of virtue would be upon all occasions exposed to the armed malice of the wicked.

Bishop Sprat's hist of the Royal Society, p. iii.

B. You know my opinion already. I reckon such an use of eloquence very fair and allowable ; seeing it excites a laudable emulation, and helps to improve men's talents.

A. What kind of talents would you have chiefly improved ? Suppose you had some new state, or commonwealth, to model, in what kinds of knowledge would you have the subjects trained up, and instructed ?

B. In every kind that could make them better. I would endeavour to make them good subjects, peaceable, obedient, and zealous for the public welfare. I would have them fit to defend their country in case of war ; and in peace to observe and support the laws ; to govern their families ; cultivate their lands ; train up their children to the practice of virtue, and inspire them with a strong and just sense of religion : I would have them carry on such a trade as the state and necessities of the country might require : and apply themselves to such arts and sciences as are useful in common life. These I think, ought to be the chief aims of a lawgiver.

A. Your views are very just and solid. You would then have subjects averse to laziness ; and employed about such useful things as should tend some way or other to advance the public good.

B. Certainly.

A. And would you exclude all useless professions ?

B. Yes.

A. You would allow only of such bodily exercises as conduced to people's health, and strength? I do not mention the beauty of the body; for that is a natural consequence of health and vigour, in bodies that are duly formed.

B. I would suffer no other exercises.

A. Would you not therefore banish all those that serve only to amuse people, and cannot render them fitter to bear either the constant labours and employments of peace, or the fatigues of war?

B. Yes; I should follow that rule.

A. I suppose you would do it for the same reason that you would likewise condemn (as you already granted,) all those exercises of the mind which do not conduce to render it more strong, sound, and beautiful; by making it more virtuous.

B. It is so. What do you infer from that? I do not yet see your drift: your windings are very long.

A. Why; I would argue from the plainest principles; and not advance the least step, without carrying light and certainty along with us. Answer me then, if you please.

B. Seeing we lay down the rule you last mentioned, for the management of the body, there is certainly greater reason to follow it in the conduct and improvement of the mind.

A. Would you permit such arts as are only subservient to pleasure, amusement, and vain curiosity; and have no relation either to

the duties of domestic life, or the common offices of society ?

B. I would banish all such from my commonwealth.

A. If you allowed of mathematicians then it would be for the sake of mechanics, navigation, surveying of land, the fortification of places ; and such calculations as are useful in practice ; &c. So that it is the usefulness of the mathematics that would recommend them to your patronage. And if you tolerated physicians and lawyers, it would be for the preservation of health ; and the support of justice.

B. Right.

A. And with the same view of usefulness you would admit of all other serviceable professions.

B. Certainly.

A. But how would you treat the musicians ?

B. I would encourage them.

A. Would you not lay them under some proper restraint, according to the judgment and practice of the ancient Greeks, who always joined pleasure and usefulness together ?

B. Explain yourself a little.

A. Though they joined music and poetry together, and carried both these arts to the greatest perfection ; they applied them to inspire people's minds with fortitude, and noble

thoughts. They used poetry and music to prepare them for battle ; and carried musicians and their various instruments, to war. Hence came drums and trumpets, which raised in them a spirit of enthusiasm, and a sort of fury that they called divine. It was by music, and the charms of verse, that they softened savage nations : and by the same harmony, they sweetly instilled wisdom into their children. They made them sing Homer's verses to inspire their minds with the love of glory, liberty, and their native country ; and with a contempt of death, and riches, and effeminate pleasure. They gave their very dances a grave and serious turn : for it is certain they danced not merely for the sake of pleasure. We see, By David's example,† that the eastern people reckoned dancing a serious kind of employment, like music, and poetry. The mysterious dances of the priests were adopted by the heathens among their ceremonies, on solemn festivals, in honour of their gods. There were a thousand instructions couched under their poems, and their fables : nay, their most grave and austere philosophy always appeared with an air of gaiety, and good humour. All those arts that consisted either in melodious sounds, regular motions of the body, or the use of words ; music, dancing, eloquence, and poetry, were invented to express the passions ; and, by that

* 2 Sam. vi. 5, 14.

means, to communicate these passions to others. Thus did they endeavour to convey noble sentiments to people's minds, and give them lively, affecting views of the beauty of virtue, and the deformity of vice. So that all these arts, under the shew of pleasure, favoured the most serious designs of the ancients; and were used to promote morality and religion. Even the diversion of hunting was encouraged to train up the youth for war. Their strongest pleasures contained always some solid instruction. From which source flowed those many heroic virtues in Greece, which all ages have since admired. It is true, this first kind of instruction was afterwards changed; and of itself was accompanied with remarkable defects. The chief fault of it was its being founded on a false and pernicious scheme of religion: in which the Greeks, and all the ancient sages of the heathen world were strangely deceived; being plunged into gross idolatry. But notwithstanding this fundamental mistake, they chose a very proper way of inspiring men with religion and virtue: their method was wise, agreeable, and apt to make a lively, lasting impression.

C. You said that this first institution was afterwards changed: pray, how did it happen?

A. Though virtue gives men the true politeness; if great care be not taken, politeness gradually degenerates into an unmanly softness. The asiatic Greeks fell first into this

corruption. The Ionians grew effeminate; and all that coast of Asia was a theatre of luxury. The Cretans too became corrupted, notwithstanding the wise laws of Minos. You know the† verse that St. Paul quotes from one of their own poets. Corinth was remarkable for its excessive riot, and dissoluteness. The Romans, as yet unpolished, began to fall into such practices as quite relaxed their rustic virtue. Athens was not free from the general contagion, with which Greece was all-over infected. Pleasure, which was used at first as the means to convey wisdom into people's minds, usurped the place of wisdom itself: and in vain did the philosophers remonstrate against this disorder. Socrates arose, and shewed his deluded fellow citizens that the pleasure, about which they were entirely employed, ought only to be used as the vehicle of wisdom, and an incentive to virtue. Plato, his disciple, (who was not ashamed to compose his dialogues on the plan and subject of his master's discourses,) banished from his republic all such musical notes, scenes of tragedy, and poetical compositions, (even such parts of Homer himself,) as did not incline people to love order, and wise laws. This, Sir, was the judgment of Socrates and Plato concerning poets and musicians: do you approve of it?

* Κρήτες καὶ ψεύσαι, κακὰ Θηρία, γαστέρες ἄργυρ.
Tit. i. 12.

B. I am entirely of their mind ; and would allow of nothing that is useless. Since we may find pleasure enough in solid and valuable things, we ought not to seek for it elsewhere. In order to recommend virtue to men's esteem and practice, we must show them that it is consistent with pleasure : and on the contrary, if we separate pleasure from virtue, people will be strongly-tempted to forsake a virtuous course. Besides, that which gives pleasure only, without instruction, can at best but amuse and soften the mind. Do not you see, Sir, how much a philosopher I am become, by hearing you ? But let us go on to the end : for we are not yet perfectly agreed.

A. I hope we shall be very quickly. And since you are grown so much a philosopher. give me leave to ask you one question more. We have obliged musicians, and poets, to employ their art only for promoting virtue ; and the subjects of your new republic are debarred from all such spectacles as can only please and not instruct them. But what would you do with conjurers ?

B. They are impostors that ought to be banished from all societies.

A. They do no harm. You cannot think they are sorcerers : so that you have no reason to be afraid of their practising any diabolical art.

B. No, I do not fear that: nor should I give the least credit to any of their senseless stories. But they do harm enough by amusing the common people. I will not suffer such idle persons in my commonwealth, as divert others from their business, and have no other employment but to amuse people with foolish talk.

A. But, perhaps, they get a livelihood that way; and lay up wealth for themselves, and their families.

B. No matter: they must find out some honest way of living. It is not enough that they seek a livelihood; they must gain it by some employment that is useful to the public. I say the same of all those strolling vagabonds who amuse crowds with silly prattle and foolish songs. For though they should never lie, nor say any thing that is immodest; their being useless to the public is guilt enough. So that they ought either to be excluded from the society, or compelled to follow some useful occupation.

A. Would you not at least tolerate tragedians, provided they represent no scenes of immodesty or extravagant love? I do not ask you this question as a Christian: answer only as a lawgiver, and a philosopher.

B. If tragedies did not conduce to instruction as well as to pleasure, I should condemn them.

A. Right. In that you are exactly of Plato's opinion: for he would not allow of any

poems or tragedies in his republic, that should not first be examined by the guardians of the laws : that so the people might neither hear nor see any thing but what should tend to strengthen the laws, and promote virtue. In this you likewise fall in with the sentiments of other ancient authors, who judged that tragedy ought to turn chiefly upon two passions ; either the terror that arises from a view of the fatal effects of vice ; or that compassion which accompanies the representation of an oppressed and steady virtue. Sophocles and Euripides wrote with these views, and always endeavoured to excite either pity or terror.

B. I remember I have met with this last rule in Mr. Boileau's Art of Poetry.

A. You are right. He is a man that knows perfectly well not only the foundation of poetry ; but likewise the solid aim to which philosophy (superior to all arts) ought to direct the poet.

B. But whither are you leading me all this while ?

A. I lead you no farther : you guide yourself now ; and are happily come to the conclusion I first proposed. Have you not said, that in your republic, you would not suffer idle people who amuse others, and have no other business but merely to talk ? Is it not upon this principle that you would exclude all such tragedies as do not convey instruction as well as pleasure ? Now, will you suffer that to be done in prose, that you will not tolerate in verse ? After such a just rigour against

useless poetry, how can you shew any favour to those* declaimers who talk only to shew their parts?

B. But these orators we were speaking of, have two designs that are commendable.

A. What are they?

B. The first is to maintain themselves: for, by their profession they procure a subsistence. Their rhetoric gets them repute; and this brings along with it that wealth they stand in need of.

A. You yourself have already answered this pretence; for, did you not say that it is not enough that one gains a livelihood, unless he get it by some employment that is useful to the public? He who should represent tragedies that give no instruction, might get his bread by them: but this would not hinder you from driving him out of your commonwealth. You would say to him, 'Go choose

* Who can behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties these specious tropes and figures have brought on our knowledge? how many rewards, that are due to more profitable and difficult arts, have been still snatched away by the easy vanity of fine speaking; for now I am warmed with this just anger, I cannot withhold myself from betraying the shallowness of all those seeming mysteries, upon which we writers and speakers look so big. And in few words, I dare say, that of all the studies of men, nothing may be sooner obtained, than this vicious abundance of phrase, this trick of metaphors, this volubility of tongue, which makes so great noise in the world. But I spend words in vain; for the evil is now so inveterate, that it is hard to know whom to blame; or where to begin to reform. We all value one another so much upon this beautiful deceit, and labour so long after it, in the years of our education; that we cannot but ever after think kinder of it than it deserves.

Bishop Sprat's Hist. of the Royal Society, p. 112:

some regular useful employment ; and do not divert your neighbours from their business. If you would have a lawful gain from them, apply yourself to do them some real service ; or to make them more wise and virtuous.' Now why should you not say the same to the rhetoricians ?

B. But I have a second reason to offer for tolerating them.

A. Pray, let us hear it.

B. Why ; the orator serves the public.

A. In what ?

B. He improves people's minds, and teaches them eloquence.

A. Suppose I should invent some fantastic art, or imaginary language, that could not be of any use ; could I serve the public by teaching such a senseless language, or silly art ?

B. No : because one cannot serve others as a master, unless he could teach them something that is useful.

A. You cannot prove then that an orator serves the public, by his teaching eloquence, unless you could first shew that it is an useful art. Of what use are a man's fine thoughts if they do not advance the public good ? I am very sensible that they are advantageous to himself ; for they dazzle his hearers ; who have so bad a taste that they will applaud his skill, and even reward him for his useless talk. But ought you to suffer such a mercenary ; fruitless eloquence in the government you have to model ? A shoemaker is serviceable in his

way, and maintains his family with what he gains by supplying other people's necessities. So that you see the most ordinary employments tend to some useful purpose: and there is no other art but the rhetorician's that serves only to amuse people with talking. In fine, such eloquence can only, on the one hand, satisfy the vain curiosity of the hearers, and encourage their idleness; and, on the other, gratify the declaimer's pride and ambition. But, for the honour of your republic, Sir, do not tolerate such an abuse.

B. I must grant that an orator's aim should be to make people more wise and virtuous.

A. Do not forget this: you shall see the consequences of it by and by.

B. Notwithstanding this concession, he who is employed in instructing others, may at the same time, endeavour to acquire reputation and wealth for himself.

A. I told you before, that we are not now handling the point as christians: I need only use philosophy against you. Let me put you in mind that you grant an orator is obliged to instruct others with a design to improve them in virtue. Thus we get rid of all useless declaimers. We ought not even to suffer panegyrist any farther than they render true wisdom and probity more amiable by their praises; and propose models of virtue† and valour that are worthy of imitation.

* Perspicuum est igitur alia esse in homine optanda, alia laudanda. Genus, forma, vires, opes, divitiæ, ceteraque

B. What then, is a panegyric good for nothing, unless it be full of morality?

A. Have you not granted this already? Instruction is the proper end of speech: and the only good reason for praising any hero, is, that we may represent his worth to others, in order to excite their emulation; and to shew them that virtue and true glory are inseparable. Therefore a panegyric should be kept free from all general, excessive, flattering praises; and such barren thoughts as do not afford the least instruction. Every thing should tend to make the hearers in love with what is truly great and good. But we find that most panegyrists seem to magnify particular virtues, only that they may the more effectually praise those that practised them, and set off their heroes to greater advantage. When they have any one to praise, they exalt his peculiar virtues far above all others. But every thing has its turn; and, on another occasion, those very qualities, which they preferred before, must now give place to some other virtues, that come in course to be extolled to the highest pitch. In this respect, I think Pliny is to be blamed. If he had praised Trajan as a fit model for other heroes to copy after, this would have been a design worthy of an orator. But the praise of that prince

quæ fortuna det, aut extrinsecus, aut corpori, non habent in se veram laudem, quæ deberi Virtuti uni putatur.—Virtus autem quæ est per se ipsa laudabilis, et sine qua nihil laudari potest, tamen habet plures partes, quarum alia est ad laudationem aptior. Cic. de Orat. lib. ii.

(however deserving he was) ought not to have been Pliny's chief aim. Trajan should only have been proposed to mankind as an imitable example, to allure them to virtue. When a panegyrist has such a mean view, as to praise the person, rather than the virtues that render him conspicuous, this is only flattery addressed to pride.

B. What think you then of those poems that were made in praise of ancient heroes? Homer has his Achilles; and Virgil his Æneas. Will you condemn these two poets?

A. By no means, Sir: do but examine the design of their works. In the *Iliad*, Achilles is the chief hero; but his praise is not the main end of the poem. His character is faithfully drawn with all its defects: nay, these very defects are a part of that instruction which the poet designed to convey to posterity. The great design of this work was to inspire the Greeks with the love of warlike glory; and a dread of discord, as the greatest obstacle to success. This moral instruction is plainly interwoven throughout the poem. The *Odyssey* indeed represents, in Ulysses, a hero more regular, and more accomplished: but this is still natural. For, of course, a man, like Ulysses, whose chief character is wisdom, must be more wary, and uniform in his conduct, than such a rough, warm, forward youth as Achilles. So that in drawing both these heroes, Homer seems only to have copied nature. In fine, throughout the *Odyssey* we find

innumerable instructions for the whole conduct of life : and one cannot but observe that the poet's design, in describing a prudent man, whose wisdom makes him always successful, was to shew posterity what good effects might be expected from prudent piety, and a regular life. Virgil in his *Æneid*, has imitated the *Odyssey* in his hero's character ; and has drawn him brave, moderate, pious, and steady. But it is evident that the praise of *Æneas* was not the poet's principal aim. That hero was designed to represent the Roman people, who descended from him : and Virgil meant to shew them that their extraction was divine ; that the gods had destined them to govern the world : and by this he animated them to the practice of such heroic virtues as might support the glory designed for them. Now a heathen could not possibly devise a nobler moral than this. The only fault of which Virgil can be suspected, is his having had his private interest too much in view ; and his turning his excellent poem to the praise of Augustus, and his family, with too great an air of flattery. But we ought not to criticise any author too severely.

B. But will you not allow a poet, or an orator, to seek his fortune in an honourable way ?

A. After this useful digression concerning panegyrics, we now return to the difficulty you proposed. The question is, whether an orator ought to be entirely disinterested ?

B. I do not think that he ought : for this would overturn the most common maxims.

A. In your republic, would you not have orators obliged to the strictest rules of truth ? do not you own that they ought never to speak in public, but in order to instruct people, to reform their conduct, and strengthen the laws ?

B. Yes.

A. An orator then should have nothing either to hope or fear from his hearers, with regard to his own interest. If you allowed of ambitious* mercenary declaimers, do you think they would oppose all the foolish, unruly passions of men ? If they themselves be subject to avarice, ambition, luxury, and such shameful disorders, will they be able to cure others ? If they seek after wealth ; can they be fit to disengage others from that mean pursuit ? I grant, that a virtuous and disinterested orator ought always to be supplied with the conveniences of life : nor can he ever want them, if he be a true philosopher ; I mean, such a wise and worthy person as is fit to reform the manners of men : for then he will live after a plain, modest, frugal, laborious manner : he will have occasion but for little :

* Jam hoc quis non videt, maximam partem orationis in tractatu æqui bonique consistere ? dicetne de his secundum debitam rerum dignitatem malus atque iniquus ? denique edemus id quod nullo modo fieri potest, idem ingenii, studii, doctrinæ, pessimo, atque optimo viro, uter melior dicetur orator ? nimirum qui homo quoque melior. Non igitur unquam malus idem homo, et perfectus orator. Quint. lib. xii. c. 1.

and that little he will never want; though, he should earn it with his own hands. Now, what is superfluous ought not to be offered him, as the recompense of his public services: and indeed it is not worthy of his acceptance. He may have honour and authority conferred on him: but if he be master of his passions, as we suppose, and above selfish views, he will use this authority only for the public good; and be ready to resign it, when he can no longer enjoy it without flattery or dissimulation. In short, an orator cannot be fit to persuade people, unless he be inflexibly upright; for, without this steady virtue, his talents and address, would, like a mortal poison, infect and destroy the body politic. For this reason, Cicero* thought that virtue is the chief and most essential quality of an orator: and that he should be a person of such unspotted probity as to be a pattern to his fellow-citizens: without which he cannot even seem to

* *Est enim eloquentia una quædam de summis virtutibus—quæ quo major est vis, hoc est magis probitate jungenda, summaque prudentia; quarum virtutum expertibus si dicendi copiam tradiderimus, non eos quidem oratores effecerimus; sed furentibus quædam arma dederimus. De Orat. l. iii. § 14.*

Sit ergo nobis orator quem instituimus is, qui a M. Cicerone finitur, vir bonus dicendi peritus—Adde quod ne studio quidem operis pulcherrimi vacare mens, nisi omnibus vitiis libera, potest—Quid putamus facturas cupiditatem, avaritiam, invidiam? quarum impotentissimæ cogitationes, somnos etiam ipsos, et illa per quietem visa, perturbent. Nihil est enim tam occupatum, tam multiforme, tot ac tam variis affectibus concisum atque laceratum, quam mala mens. Quint. lib. xii. cap. 1.

be convinced himself of what he says ; and consequently, he cannot persuade others.

B. I am sensible there is a great deal of weight in what you say ; but after all, may not a man fairly employ his talents to raise himself in the world ?

A. Let us look back always to the principles we laid down. We have agreed that eloquence, and the profession of an orator, should be devoted to the instruction of people, and the reformation of their practice. Now, to do this with freedom and success, a man must be disinterested ; and must teach others to contemn death, and riches, and unmanly pleasure. He must infuse into their minds the love of moderation, frugality, a generous concern for the public good, and an inviolable regard to the laws and constitution : and the orator's zeal for all these must appear in his conduct, as well as in his discourses. But will he who strives to please others, that he may make his fortune ; and who therefore avoids disobliging any body ; I say, will such an artful, selfish person inculcate unacceptable truths with boldness and authority ? or, if he should, will any one believe a man who does not seem to believe himself ?

B. But supposing him to be in narrow circumstances, he does no harm, I hope, by endeavouring to improve them.

A. If he be pinched, let him try to mend his condition some other way. There are other professions that will easily set him above

want. But if he be in such extreme distress as to depend on relief from the public; he is not yet fit to be an orator. Would you choose men that are indigent, and almost starving, to be judges in your commonwealth? Would you not be afraid that their wants might expose them to corruption; or betray them into some dishonourable compliance? Would you not rather choose persons of note and distinction who are above necessity, and out of the reach of its temptations?

B. I believe I should.

A. For the same reason, if you wanted orators, that is, public masters to instruct, reclaim, and form the minds and manners of the people, would you not choose such men as wanted nothing, and are far above little selfish aims? And if there were others who had proper talents for this superior office, but were clogged with their personal concerns, and narrow views of private interests; would you not excuse them from shewing their eloquence till they were more easy and disengaged in their circumstances; and could speak in public without being suspected of any mean design?

B. It would be better. But does not the experience of our own age plainly shew, that an orator may make his fortune by preaching rigid virtue with great vehemence? Where can we find keener satires against the prevailing corruptions of the age, and severer moral characters than those which come from the

pulpit? Yet people are not disturbed at them : nay they are pleased with them : and the ingenious preacher gets preferment by them.

A. It is very true : but moral instructions have no weight nor influence, when they are neither supported by clear principles, nor good examples. Whom do you see converted by them? People are accustomed to hear such harangues : and are amused by them, as with so many fine scenes passing before their eyes. They hearken to such lectures just as they would read a satire : and they look on the speaker as one that acts his part well. They believe his* life, more than his talk : and when

* The clergy have one great advantage beyond all the rest of the world in this respect, besides all others, that whereas the particular callings of other men prove to them great distractions, and lay many temptations in their way, to divert them from minding their high and holy calling, of being christians ; it is quite otherwise with the clergy : the more they follow their proper callings, they do the more certainly advance their general one : the better priests they are, they become also the better christians. Every part of their calling, when well performed, raises good thoughts, and brings good ideas into their minds ; and tends both to increase their knowledge, and quicken their sense of divine matters. A priest then is more accountable to God, and the world for his deportment, and will be more severely accounted with, than any other person whatsoever. He is more watched over and observed than all others. Very good men will be, even to a censure, jealous of him : very bad men will wait for his halting, and insult upon it : and all sorts of persons will be willing to defend themselves against the authority of his doctrine and admonitions, by this, he says, but does not—the world will reverse this quite, and consider rather how a clerk lives, than what he says. They see the one ; and from it conclude what he himself thinks of the other : and will think themselves not a little justified, if they can say that they did no worse than they saw their minister do before them. Therefore a priest must not only abstain from gross

they know him to be selfish, ambitious, vain, given up to sloth and luxury ; and see that he parts with none of those enjoyments which he exhorts others to forsake ; though, for the sake of custom and ceremony, they hear him declaim ; they believe and act as he does. But, what is worst of all ; people are too apt to conclude, that men of this profession do not believe what they teach : this disparages their function : and when others preach with a sincere zeal ; people will scarce believe this zeal to be sincere.

B. I cannot but own that your notions hang well together ; and that they are very convincing when one considers them attentively. But tell me freely, does not all you have said on this subject flow from a pure zeal for christian piety ?

A. No : if an unbeliever reason justly, he must fall into the same train of thoughts : but indeed one must have a christian spirit to act up to them : for it is grace alone that can suppress the disorderly emotions of selflove.

scandals ; but keep at the farthest distance from them,—such diversions as his health or the temper of his mind, may render proper for him, ought to be manly, decent, and grave ; and such as may neither possess his mind or time too much, nor give a bad character of him to his people. He must also avoid too much familiarity with bad people ; and the squandering away his time in too much vain and idle discourse. His cheerfulness ought to be frank ; but neither excessive nor licentious. His friends, and his garden ought to be his chief diversions ; as his study, and his parish ought to be his chief employments,—*Bp. Burnet's Disc. of the pastoral care, ch. viii.*

When I pressed you with the authority of Socrates and Plato, you would not resign your judgment to theirs; and now, since reason itself begins to convince you; and that I need not enforce the truth from authorities; what if I should tell you after all, that I have only used their arguments on this subject.

B. Is it possible? I should be very glad of it.

A. Well then: Plato introduces Socrates discoursing with Gorgias, a famous rhetorician, and Callicles, one of his disciples. This Gorgias was Isocrates' master; and (as Tully tells us,) he was the first man that boasted of his being able to talk eloquently on every thing: in which ridiculous vanity he was afterwards imitated by other Greek declaimers. These two men, Gorgias and Callicles, harangued plausibly enough on every subject; being wits that shone in conversation: and had no other business but to talk finely. However they wanted what* Socrates wished every man to have, solid principles of morality, and a sedate, just way of reasoning. Plato therefore

*—*Inventi sunt qui, cum ipsi doctrina, et ingeniis abundarent, a re autem civili et negotiis, animi quodam judicio abhorerent, hanc dicendi exercitationem exagitant, atque contemnerent. Quorum princeps Socrates fuit, is qui omnium eraditorum testimonio, totiusque judicio Græciæ, cum prædientia, et acumine, et venustate, et subtilitate, tum vero eloquentia, varietate, copia, quamcumque in partem dedisset, omnium fuit facile princeps—cujus ingenium variosque sermones immortalitati scriptis suis Plato tradidit.*—

CICERO *de Orat.* lib. i. §16.

having shewn what a ridiculous turn of mind these men had ; he represents Socrates as diverting himself with their folly, and facetiously puzzling the two orators so much, that they could not tell him what eloquence is. Then he proves that rhetoric, (which was the profession of these declaimers) is not truly an art : for, according to him, ‘an art is a regular discipline, which teaches men to do something that will help to make them wiser, or better than they are.’ So that he allows of no other arts but the liberal ones : and he shews that even these are perverted, when they are applied to any other end besides training up men to virtue. He proves that this was not the aim of the rhetoricians : that even Themistocles and Pericles had quite other views ; and that therefore they were not truly orators. He says those famous men only persuaded the Athenians to make harbours, and build walls, and obtain victories : they only made their citizens wealthy, warlike, and powerful ; and were afterwards ill-treated for it : which was really no more than they might have expected. If they had rendered the people good and virtuous by their rhetoric, they would have been sure of a just recompense : for, he who makes men upright, and good, cannot lose the reward of his labour ; seeing virtue and ingratitude are inconsistent. I need not tell you all the arguments he uses to shew how useless such false rhetoric is ; for, all that I have said hitherto on this point, in my

own name, is really taken from him. It will be more proper to represent to you what he says of the evils that these vain haranguers occasion in the republic.

B. It is evident that such rhetoricians were dangerous in the Grecian commonwealths, where they could mislead the people; and usurp the government.

A. That is the chief danger that Socrates apprehended from them. But the principles he lays down, on this occasion, reach a great deal further. In fine, though you and I speak now of ordering a commonwealth; our inquiry and conclusions are not applicable to democracy alone; but to every kind of government, whether it be strictly a republic, an aristocracy, or a monarchy. So that the particular form of government does not enter into the present question. For in all countries, the rules of Socrates are equally useful.

C. I wish you would explain them to us.

A. He says that seeing a man is composed of a mind and a body; he ought to improve them both. Now there are two arts that concern the mind; and two others, that relate to the body. The two that belong to the mind, are moral philosophy, and the knowledge of the national laws. Under the head of moral philosophy he comprehends the laws of nature and nations; and all those dictates of philosophy that are proper to govern the inclinations and manners of the whole republic, as well as of every individual member of it. He

considered the second art, as a remedy that is to be used to suppress falsehood, injustice, and the like disorders among the citizens: for, by it lawsuits are determined; and crimes are punished. So that moral philosophy serves to prevent evil; and the knowledge of the laws and constitution, to punish it. There are likewise two arts for managing the body; the gymnastic art, which by due exercise and temperance, renders it healthy, active, vigorous, and graceful; (for, you know, Sir, the ancients made a wonderful use of this art; which we have now quite lost;) and the knowledge of physic which cures the body when its health is lost, or impaired. The gymnastic art assists the body, as moral philosophy doth the soul; namely to form and improve it: and skill in medicine is helpful to the body, as the knowledge of the laws is to the mind; for correcting and curing disorders. But this wise institution was altered, says Socrates: instead of a solid, practical philosophy, we have only the vain subtilty of wrangling sophists: a set of spurious philosophers who abuse reason: and, having no sense of public good, aim only at promoting their own selfish ends. Instead of attaining a thorough insight into the national laws, people are amused and misled by vainglorious ostentation of these rhetoricians, who endeavour only to please and dazzle the mind: and instead of recommending the knowledge of the public constitution, and the administration of jus-

tice, (which being the medicine of the soul, should be applied to cure its disorderly passions,) these false orators think of nothing but how to spread their own reputation. And with regard to the body, says Socrates, the gymnastic art begins to be exchanged for skill in dress; which gives the body but false, deceitful ornaments. Whereas we ought to desire only such a natural comeliness as results from health of body, and due proportion of its members; which must be acquired and preserved by temperance and exercise. The proper and seasonable use of medicine is likewise laid aside to make room for delicious dishes, and such palatable things as raise and ensnare the appetite. And instead of carrying off gross humours from the body by proper evacuations, to restore its health; nature is clogged and overcharged; and a false appetite is excited by all the various ways of luxury and intemperance. He farther observes, that those orators, who in order to cure men, should have given them bitter physic, and, with authority, have inculcated the most disagreeable truths; have on the contrary done for the mind, what cooks do for the body: their rhetoric is only an art of dressing up delicacies to gratify the corrupted taste of the people. All their concern is to please and sooth them, by raising their curiosity and admiration. For, these declaimers harangue only for themselves. He concludes his remarks with asking, where are those citizens

whom the rhetoricians have cured of their vicious habits? Whom have they made sober and virtuous? Thus Socrates describes the general disorders, and corruption of manners that prevailed in his time. But does he not talk like* one of the present age, who observes what passes among us; and speaks of the abuses that reign in our own days? Now you have heard the sentiments of this wise heathen: what do you say of that eloquence which tends only to please, and give pretty descriptions; when (as he says) we ought to cauterize, and cut to the quick; and earnestly endeavour to cure people's minds by the bitterness of remedies, and the severity of an abstemious diet? I appeal to your own judgment in this case: if you were sick, would you be pleased with a physician, who in the extremity of your illness should waste his time, and amuse you with explaining to you some fine hypothesis in an elegant style: instead of making pertinent inquiries into the

* The ornaments of speaking are much degenerated from their original usefulness. They were at first, no doubt, an admirable instrument in the hands of wise men, when they were only employed to describe goodness, honesty, obedience; in larger, fairer, and more moving images; to represent truth clothed with bodies; and to bring knowledge back again to our very senses, whence it was at first derived to our understanding. But *now* they are generally changed to worse uses: they make the *fancy* disgust the best things, if they come sound and unadorned: they are in open defiance against reason; professing not to hold much correspondence with that; but with its slaves, the passions: they give the mind a motion too changeable and bewitching, to consist with right practice.

Bishop Sprat's Hist. of R. S. p. 111, 112.

cause and symptoms of your distempers ; and prescribing suitable remedies ? Or, in a trial at law, where your estate or your life were at stake, what would you think of your lawyer, if he should play the wit in your defence, and fill his pleading with flowers of rhetoric and quaint turns, instead of arguing with gravity, strength of reason, and earnestness, to gain your cause ? Our natural love of life, and well-being, shows us plainly the absurdity of false oratory, and of the unseasonable ostentation of it, in such cases as I have now mentioned : but we are so strangely unconcerned about religion, and the moral conduct of life, that we do not observe the same ridicule in careless, vain-glorious orators ; who yet ought to be the spiritual physicians and censors of the people. Indeed the sentiments of Socrates on this subject ought to make us ashamed.

B. I perceive clearly enough that, according to your reasoning, orators ought to be the defenders of the laws, and instructors of the people to teach them true wisdom and virtue. But among the Romans the rhetoric of the bar was otherwise employed.

A. That was certainly the end of it. For, when orators had not occasion to represent in their discourses, the general wants of the republic : they were obliged to protect innocence, and the rights of particular persons. And it was on this account that their profession was so much honoured ; and that Tully

gives us such a* lofty character of a true orator.

B. Let us hear then how orators ought to speak. I long to know your thoughts on this point : seeing you deny the finical, florid manner of Isocrates, which is so much admired and imitated by others.

A. Instead of giving you my opinion, I shall go on to lay before you the rules that the ancients give us : but I shall only touch upon the chief points : for, I suppose, you do not expect that I should enter into an endless detail of the precepts of rhetoric. There are but too many useless ones ; which you must have read in those books where they are copiously explained. It will be enough if we consider the most important rules. Plato in his *Phædrus* shews us, that the greatest fault of rhetoricians is their studying the art of persuasion, before they have learned, (from the principles of true philosophy,) what those things are of which they ought to persuade

* Neque vero mihi quidquam præstabilius videtur, quam posse dicendo tenere hominum cœtus, mentes allicere, voluntates compellere quo velit; unde autem velit, deducere. Hæc una res in omni libero populo, maximeque in pacatis tranquillisque civitatibus præcipue semper floruit, semperque dominata est. Quid enim est aut tam admirabile, quam ex infinita multitudine hominum existere unum, qui id quod omnibus natura sit datum, vel solus, vel cum paucis facere possit ?—aut tam potens, tamque magnificum, quam populi motus, judicium religiones, senatus gravitatem, unius oratione converti ?—ac ne plura, quæ sunt pene innumerabilia, consector, comprehendam brevi: sic enim statuo, perfecti oratoris moderatione, et sapientia, non solum ipsius dignitatem, sed et privatorum plurimorum, et universæ reipublicæ salutem maxime contineri. *Cic. de Orat. lib. i. § 8.*

men. He would have orators begin with the study of mankind in general ; and then apply themselves to the knowledge of the particular genius and manners of those whom they may have occasion to instruct and persuade. So that they ought first of all to know the nature of man, his chief end, and his true interest : the parts of which he is composed, his mind, and his body ; and the true way to make him happy : they ought likewise to understand his passions, the disorders they are subject to, and the art of governing them ; how they may be usefully raised, and employed on what is truly good ; and, in fine, the proper rules to make him live in peace, and become entirely sociable. After this general study, comes that which is particular. Orators ought to know the laws and customs of their country ; and how far they are agreeable to the genius and temper of the people ; what are the manners of the several ranks and conditions among them ; their different ways of education ; the common prejudices, and separate interests that prevail in the present age ; and the most proper way to instruct and reform the people. You see, Sir, this knowledge comprehends all the solid parts of philosophy and politics. So that Plato meant to shew us that none but a philosopher can be a true orator. And it is in this sense we must understand all he says in his *Gorgias*, against the rhetoricians ; I mean, that set of men who made profession of talking finely

and persuading others : without endeavouring to know, from solid philosophy, what one ought to teach them. In short, according to Plato, the true art of oratory consists in understanding those useful truths of which we ought to convince people ; and the art of moving their passions, in order to persuasion. Cicero* says almost the very same things. He seems, at first, to think that an orator should know every thing ; because that he may have occasion to speak on all sorts of subjects ; and (as Socrates observed before him)† a man can never talk well on a point of which he is not entirely master. But afterwards, because of the pressing necessities and shortness of life, Tully insists only upon those parts of knowledge that he thinks the most necessary for an orator. He would have him at least well instructed in all that part of philosophy which relates to the con-

* Ac mea quidem sententia nemo poterit esse omni laude cumulatus orator, nisi erit omnium rerum magnarum, atque artium scientiam consecutus. *De Orat. lib. 1. §. 6.* Oratorem plenum atque perfectum esse eum dicam, qui de omnibus rebus possit varie copioseque dicere. *Ibid. §. 13.* verum enim oratori quæ sunt in hominum vita, quandoquidem in ea versetur orator, atque ea est ei subjecta materies, omnia quæ sita, audita, lecta, disputata, tractata, agitata esse debent. *Lib. iii. §. 14.*

† Etenim ex rerum cognitione efflorescat, et redundet oportet oratio : quæ, nisi subest res ab oratore percepta, et cognita, inanem quandam habet elocutionem, et pene puerilem. *De Orat. lib. i. §. 6.*

‡ Positum sit igitur in primis—sine philosophia non posse effici, quem quærimus eloquentem—nec vero sine philosophorum disciplina, genus, et speciem cujusque rei cernere, neque eam definiendo explicare, nec tribuere in partes

duct and affairs of social life. But above all things he would have an orator* know the frame of man, both with regard to his soul, and body, and the natural tendency and force of his passions ; because the great end of eloquence is to move the secret springs of them. He reckons the† knowledge of the laws, and constitution, to be the foundation of all public discourses : but he does not think a thorough insight into all the particular cases and questions in law to be necessary ; because, upon occasion, one may have recourse to experienced lawyers, whose peculiar profession it is to understand and disentangle such intricate points. He thinks, with Plato, that an

possumus: nec judicare quæ vera, quæ falsa sint; neque cernere consequentia, repugnantia videre, ambigua distinguere. Quid dicam de natura rerum cujus cognitio magnam orationis sup-peditat copiam? De vita, de officiis, de virtute, de moribus? *Orat.* § 4.

* Omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscendi.—*De Orat. lib. i.* § 5.—Num admoveri possit oratio ad sensus animorum, atque motus vel inflammandos, vel etiam extinguendos (quod unum in oratore dominatur,) sine *diligentissima per-estigatione* earum omnium rationum quæ de *naturis* humani generis, ac moribus, a philosophis explicantur — *De Orat. lib. i.* § 14. Quare hic locus de vita et moribus, totus est oratori perdiscendus. *Ibid.* § 15.

† Bibliothecas mehercule omnium philosophorum unus mihi videtur duodecim tabularum libellus, si quis *legum* fontes, et capita viderit, et auctoritatis pondere et utilitatis ubertate superare. Ac si nos, id quod maxime debet, nostra patria delectat.—Cujus primum nobis mens, mos, disciplina nota esse debet : vel quia est patria, parens omnium nostrum, vel quia tanta sapientia fuisse in jure constituendo putanda est, quanta fuit in his tantis operibus imperii comparandis. *De Orat. lib. i.* §. 44.

‡ Nec vero dialecticis modo sit instructus, sed habeat omnes philosophiæ notos, et tractatos locos. Nihil enim de re-

orator should be a master of reasoning ; and know how to define, and argue, and unravel the most specious sophisms. He says we destroy eloquence, if we should separate it from philosophy : for then, instead of wise orators, we should have only trifling, injudicious declaimers. He further requires not only an exact knowledge of all the principles of ethics ; but likewise that the orator be fully acquainted with* antiquity. He recommends the careful perusal of the ancient Greek writers, especially the historians ; both for their style, and for the historical facts they relate. He particularly enjoins† the study of the poets : because of the great resemblance there is betwixt the figures of poetry, and those of elo-

ligione, nihil de morte, nihil de pietate, nihil de caritate patriæ ; nihil de bonis rebus, aut malis ; nihil de virtutibus, aut vitiis—nihil, inquam, sine ea scientia, quam dixi, graviter, ample, copiose dici, et explicari potest. *Orat.* § 33.

* Cognoscat etiam rerum gestarum et memoriæ veteris ordinem, maxime scilicet nostræ civitatis ; sed et imperiosorum populorum et regum illustrium—nescire enim quid antea, quam natus sis, acciderit, id est semper esse puerum—commemoratio autem antiquitatis, exemplorumque prolatio summa cum delectatione, et auctoritatem orationi affert, et fidem. *Orat.* §. 34.—Apud Græcos autem eloquentissimi homines remoti a causis forensibus, cum ad cæteras res illustres, tum ad scribendam historiam maxime se applicaverunt. Namque et Herodotus—et post illum Thucydides omnes dicendi artificio mea sententia facilè vicit—denique etiam a philosophia profectus princeps Xenophon.—*De Orat. lib.* ii. §. 13, 14.

† Legendi etiam poetæ, cognoscenda historia, omnium bonarum artium scriptores.—*De Orat. lib.* i. § 34. Est enim finitimus oratori poeta, numeris adstrictior paulo, verborum autem licentia liberior ; multis vero ornandi generibus socius ac pene par ; in hoc quidem certe prope idem, nullis ut terminis circumscribat aut definiat jus suum, quo minus ei liceat eadem illa facultate, et copia vagari qua velit.—*Ibid.* §. 16.

quence. In fine, he often declares that an orator ought to furnish his mind with a clear, comprehensive view of things, before he attempt to speak in public. I fancy I could almost repeat some of his words on this subject ; so often have I read them ; and so strong an impression did they make on my thoughts. You will be surprised to see how much knowledge, and how many* qualities he requires. 'An orator,' says he, 'ought to have the acuteness of logicians, the knowledge of philosophers, the style almost of the poets; the elocution and gesture of the finest actors.' Consider now how much application must be necessary to attain all this.

C. I have observed indeed, on several occasions, that some orators, though they have good natural parts, want a fund of solid knowledge. Their heads seem unfurnished : and one cannot but perceive they labour hard for matter to fill up their discourses. They do not seem to speak from the abundance of their hearts, as if they were full of useful truths : but they talk as if they were at a loss for the very next thing they are to say.

* Non quæritur mobilitas linguæ, non celeritas verborum, non denique ea quæ nobis non possumus fingere, facies, vultus, sonus. In oratore autem acumen dialecticorum, sententiæ philosophorum, verba prope pœtarum, memoria juris consultorum, vox tragædorum, gestus pene summorum actorum, est requirendus. Quamobrem nihil in hominum genere rarius perfecto oratore inveniri potest : quæ enim singularum rerum artifices, singula si mediocriter adepti sunt, probantur, ea nisi omnia summa sunt in oratore, probari non possunt.—*De Orat. lib. i. §. 28.*

A. Cicero takes notice of these kind of people ; who live always, as it were, from hand to mouth, without laying up any stock of provision. But the discourses of such declaimers appear always thin and half-starved, whatever pains they take about them. Though these men could afford three months for studying a public harangue, such particular preparations, however troublesome, must needs be very imperfect : and any judicious hearer will easily discern their defects. They ought to have employed several years in laying up a plentiful store of solid notions : and then after such a general preparation, their particular discourses would cost them but little pains. Whereas if a man, without this preparatory study, lay out all his application upon particular subjects, he is forced to put off his hearers with* florid expressions, gaudy metaphors, and jingling antitheses. He de-

* There are two extremes to be avoided with the utmost care, the frigid style, and the boyish. The former renders a discourse dry and insipid, by a languor and flatness of expression : the latter renders it ungrateful and shocking, by a swelling loftiness, and affected amplification. Those who use the frigid style, employ pompous expressions when the subject requires plain ones : and they who affect the boyish style, make use of low expressions when the matter requires the loftiest. But our language is become so modest, so reserved, and so scrupulous, that the frigid style includes all such expressions as are too strong, or too sparkling ; too bold and hardy metaphors, and frequent turns of wit. And the boyish style comprehends strokes of humour, and quaint conceits upon serious subjects ; too loose and heavy repetitions in those parts of a discourse that ought to be close and concise ; too violent exaggerations, and too laborious figures.

RAFIN. *Reflections sur l'Eloquence.*

livers nothing but indeterminate commonplace notions; and patches together shreds of learning and rhetoric which any one may see were not made one for another. He never goes to the bottom of things, but stops in superficial remarks, and oft-times in false ones. He is not able to shew truths in their proper light, and full extent; because all general truths are necessarily connected among themselves: so that one must understand almost all of them, before he can treat judiciously of any one.

C. However many of our public speakers get repute by those slight attainments you so much despise.

A. It is true, they are applauded by women and the undiscerning multitude, who are easily dazzled and imposed on: but this repute is very precarious; and could not subsist long if it were not supported by a cabal of acquaintance, and the zeal or humour of a party. They who know the true end and* rules of eloquence, cannot hear such empty, vain haranguers without satiety, disgust, and contempt.

* Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable:
A low conceit in pompous words exprest,
Is like a clown in regal purple drest.
For different styles with different subjects sort,
As several garbs with country, town, and court.
Some by old words to fame have made pretence:
Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense!
Such labour'd nothings, in so strange a style,
Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.

POPE.

C. It seems then you would have a man wait several years before he attempt to speak in public : for the flower of his age must be spent in attaining that vast fund of knowledge you reckon necessary to an orator : and then he must be so far advanced in years, that he will have but little time to exert his talents.

A. I would have him begin to exert them betimes : for I know very well how great the power of action is. But under the pretence of exercising his parts, I would not have him immediately engage himself in any kind of employment that will take off his mind from his studies. A youth may try his skill, from time to time : but for several years, a careful perusal of the best authors ought to be his main business.

C. Your judicious observation puts me in mind of a preacher I am acquainted with : who lives, as you say, from hand to mouth ; and never thinks of any subject till he be obliged to treat of it : and then he shuts himself up in his closet, turns over his concordance, combefix, and polyanthea, his collections of sermons ; and common-place book of separate sentences and quotations that he has gathered together.

A. You cannot but perceive, Sir, that this method will never make him an able, judicious preacher. In such cases, a man cannot talk with strength and clearness ; he is not sure of any thing he says : nor doth any thing flow easily from him. His

whole discourse has a borrowed air ; and looks like an awkward piece of patchwork. Certainly those are much to be blamed, who are so impatiently fond of showing their parts.

B. Before you leave us, Sir, pray tell us what you reckon the chief effect of eloquence.

A. Plato says an oration is so far eloquent as it affects the hearer's mind. By this rule you may judge certainly of any discourse you hear ; if an harangue leave you cold and languid ; and only amuses your mind, instead of enlightening it ; if it does not move your heart and passions, however florid and pompous it may be, it is not truly eloquent. Tully approves of Plato's sentiments on this point ; and tells us* that the whole drift and force of a discourse should tend to move those secret springs of action that nature has placed in the hearts of men. Would you then consult your own mind to know whether those you hear be truly eloquent ? If they make a lively impression upon you, and gain your attention and assent to what they say ; if they move and animate your passions, so as to† raise you above yourself, you may be assured they are true orators. But if instead of affecting you thus, they only please or divert you, and make you admire the brightness of their thoughts, or the beauty and propriety of their language, you may freely pronounce them to be mere declaimers.

* Lib. i. §. 5. lib. ii. § 82. † See Longinus. §. vii.

B. Stay a little, Sir, if you please, till I ask you a few more questions.

A. I wish I could stay longer, gentlemen; for your conversation is very engaging: but I have an affair to despatch which will not admit of a delay. To-morrow I will wait on you again: and then we shall finish this subject at our leisure.

B. Adieu, then, Sir, till to-morrow.

THE SECOND DIALOGUE.

B. YOU are extremely kind, Sir, in coming so punctually. Your conversation yesterday was so agreeably instructive, that we longed impatiently to hear you again upon the same subject.

C. For my part, I made what haste I could, lest I should have come too late : for, I was unwilling to lose any part of your discourse.

A. Such conferences are very useful, among those who really love truth, and talk with temper : for then they exchange their best thoughts, and express them as clearly as they can. As for myself, gentlemen, I find an advantage in conversing with you ; seeing you are not displeased at the freedom I take.

B. Let us leave off compliments, Sir ; I know best how to judge of myself : and I perceive clearly that without your assistance I should have continued in several errors. I intreat you, Sir, to go on, and set me entirely right in my notions of eloquence.

A. Your mistakes, (if you will allow me to call them so,) prevail among most people of worth and learning who have not examined this matter to the bottom.

B. Let us lose no time in preamble : we shall have a thousand things to say. Proceed

therefore, Sir, to rectify my mistakes; and begin at the point where we left off yesterday.

A. Of what point were we talking, when we parted? I have really forgot.

C. You were speaking of that kind of eloquence which consists entirely in moving the passions.

B. Yes: but I could not well comprehend that the whole design of rhetoric is to move the passions. Is that your opinion, Sir?

A. By no means.

C. It seems then I mistook you yesterday.

A. What would you say of a man who should persuade without any proof; and affect his hearers, without enlightening them? You could not reckon him a true orator. He might seduce people by this art of persuading them to what he would, without shewing them that what he recommends is right. Such a person must prove very dangerous in the commonwealth: as we have seen before from the reasoning of Socrates.

B. It is very true.

A. But on the other hand, what would you think of a man, who in his public discourses should demonstrate the truth, in a plain, dry, exact, methodical manner; or make use of the geometrical way of reasoning; without adding any thing to adorn or enliven his discourse? Would you reckon him an orator?

B. No: I should think him a philosopher only.

A. To make a complete orator then, we must find a philosopher who knows both how to demonstrate any truth; and at the same time, to give his accurate reasoning all the natural beauty and vehemence of an agreeable, moving discourse, to render it entirely eloquent. And herein lies the difference betwixt the clear, convincing method of philosophy; and the affecting, persuasive art of eloquence.

C. What do you say is the difference?

A. I say a philosopher's aim is merely to demonstrate the truth, and gain your assent; while the orator not only convinces your judgment, but commands your passions.

C. I do not take your meaning exactly yet. When a hearer is fully convinced, what is there more to be done?

A. There is still wanting what an orator would do more than a metaphysician, in proving the existence of God. The metaphysician would give you a plain demonstration of it; and stop at the speculative view of that important truth. But the orator would further add whatever is proper to excite the most affecting sentiments in your mind; and make you love that glorious Being whose existence he had proved. And this is what we call persuasion.

C. Now I understand you perfectly well.

A. You see then what reason Cicero had to say, that we must never separate philosophy from eloquence. For, the art of per-

suading without wisdom, and previous instruction, must be pernicious: and wisdom alone, without the art of persuasion, can never have a sufficient influence on the minds of men; nor allure them to the love and practice of virtue. I thought it proper to observe this by the by, to shew you how much those of the last age were mistaken in their notions of this matter. For, on the one hand there were some men of polite learning, who valued nothing but the purity of languages, and books elegantly written; but having no solid principles of knowledge, with their politeness and erudition, they were generally libertines. On the other hand, there were a set of dry, formal scholars, who delivered their instructions in such a perplexed, dogmatical, unaffected manner as disgusted every body. Excuse this digression. I return now to the point; and must remind you that persuasion has this advantage beyond mere conviction, or demonstration; that it not only sets truth in the fullest light, but represents it as amiable; and engages men to love and pursue it.* The whole art of eloquence therefore consists in enforcing the clearest proofs of any truth,

*—*Omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscendi; quod omnis vis ratioque dicendi in eorum qui audiunt, mentibus aut sedandis, aut excitandis, exprimenda est. Cic. De Orat. lib. i. §. 5. Maximaque pars orationis admovenda est ad animorum motus nonnunquam aut cohortatione, aut commemoratione, aliqua, aut in spem, aut in metum, aut ad cupiditatem, aut ad gloriam concitandos: sæpe etiam a temeritate, iracundia, spe, injuria, credulitate revocandos. Ibid. lib. ii. §. 82.*

with such powerful motives as may affect the hearers, and employ their passions to just and worthy ends; to raise their indignation at ingratitude; their horror against cruelty: their compassion for the miserable; their love of virtue: and to direct every other passion to its proper objects. This is what Plato calls affecting the minds of an audience; and moving their bowels. Do you understand me, Sir?

B. Very plainly: and I see too that eloquence is not a trifling invention to amuse and dazzle people with pompous language; but that it is a very serious art; and serviceable to morality.

A. It is both a serious and a difficult art. For which reason Tully said he had heard several persons declaim in an elegant, engaging manner; but that there were but very few complete orators, who knew how to seize and captivate the heart.

C. I am not surprised at that: for I see but very few who aim at it: nay I freely own that Cicero himself who lays down this rule, seems oftentimes to forget it. What do you think of those rhetorical flowers with which he embellished his harangues? They might amuse the fancy, but could not touch the heart.

A. We must distinguish, Sir, betwixt
 "v's orations. Those he composed in his
 Tully's when he chiefly aimed at establishing
 youth's -) have oft-times the gay defect
 his character,,

you speak of. He was then full of ambition; and far more concerned for his own fame, than for the justice of his cause. And this will always be the case when people employ one to plead for them, who regards their business no farther than as it gives him an opportunity of distinguishing himself, and of shining in his profession. Thus we find that among the Romans their pleading at the bar, was oft-times nothing else but a pompous declamation. After all, we must own that Tully's* youthful and most elaborate orations

* Nunc causa perorata, res ipsa et periculi magnitudo, C. Aquilli, cogere videtur, ut te, atque eos, qui tibi in consilio sunt, obsecret, obtesteturque P. Quintius per senectutem ac solitudinem suam, nihil aliud, nisi ut vestræ naturæ, bonitæque obsequamini: ut, cum veritas hæc faciat, plus hujus inopia possit ad misericordiam quam illius opes ad crudelitatem—si quæ pudore ornamenta sibi peperit, Nævi, ea potest contra petulantiam, te defendente, obtinere; spes est et hunc miserum atque infelicem aliquando tandem posse consistere. Sin et poterit Nævius id quod libet; et ei libebit, quod non licet; quid agendum est? Qui Deus appellandus est? Cujus hominis fides imploranda?—Ab ipso [Nævio] repudiatus, ab amicis ejus non sublevatus; ab omni magistratu agitatus atque perterritus, quem præter te appellet, [C. Aquilli] habet neminem; tibi se, tibi suas omnes opes fortunasque commendat: tibi committit existimationem ac spem reliquæ vitæ. Multis vexatus contumeliis, plurimis jactatus injuriis non turpis ad te, sed miser confugit; e fundo ornatissimo dejectus, ignominiis omnibus appetitus—itaque te hoc obsecrat, C. Aquilli, ut quam existimationem, quam honestatem injudicium tuum, prope acta jam ætate decursaque attulit, eam liceat ei secum ex hoc loco efferre; ne is, de cujus officio nemo unquam dubitavit, sexagesimo denique anno, dedecore, macula, turpissimaque ignominia notetur; ne ornamentis ejus omnibus, Sex. Nævius pro spoliis abutatur; ne per te ferat, quo minus, quæ existimatio P. Quintium usque ad senectutem perduxit, eadem usque ad rogum prosequaretur.

Cic. Orat. pro P. Quintia.

shew a great deal of his moving and persuasive art. But to form a just notion of it, we must observe the harangues he made in his more advanced age, for the necessities of the republic. For then, the experience he had in the weightiest affairs, the love of liberty, and the fear of those calamities that hung over his head, made him display the utmost efforts of his eloquence. When he endeavoured to support and revive expiring liberty, and to animate the commonwealth against Antony his enemy; you do not see him use points of wit and quaint antitheses: he is then truly eloquent. Every thing seems artless, as it ought to be when one is vehement. With a negligent air he delivers the most natural and affecting sentiments; and says every thing that can move and animate the passions.

C. You have often spoke of witty conceits and quaint turns. Pray, what do you mean by these expressions? For I can scarce distinguish those witty turns from the other ornaments of discourse. In my opinion, all the embellishments of speech flow from wit, and a vigorous fancy.

A. But Tully thinks, there are many expressions that owe all their beauty and ornament to their force and propriety; and to the nature of the subject they are applied to.

C. I do not exactly understand these terms: be pleased to shew me in a familiar way, how I may readily distinguish betwixt a flash of

wit, (or quaint turn,) and a solid ornament, or* noble, delicate thought.

A. Reading and observation will teach you best : there are a hundred different sorts of witty conceits.

C. But pray, Sir, tell me at least some general mark by which I may know them : is it affectation ?

A. Not every kind of affectation : but a fond desire to please, and shew one's wit.

C. This gives me some little light : but I want still some distinguishing marks, to direct my judgment.

A. I will give you one then, which perhaps will satisfy you. We have seen that eloquence consists not only in giving clear, convincing proofs ; but likewise in the art of moving the passions. Now in order to move them, we must be able to paint them well ; with their various objects and effects. So that I think the whole art of oratory may be reduced to proving, painting, and raising the passions. Now all those pretty, sparkling, quaint thoughts that do not tend to one of these ends, are only witty conceits.

- * True wit is *nature* to advantage dress'd,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd ;
Something, whose *truth* convinc'd at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind.
As shades more sweetly recommend the light ;
So *modest plainness* sets off *sprightly wit*.
For works may have more wit than does them good ;
As bodies perish through excess of blood.

ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

C. What do you mean by painting? I never heard that term applied to rhetoric.

A. To* paint, is not only to describe things; but to represent the circumstances of them, in such a† lively, sensible manner, that the hearer shall fancy he almost sees them with his eyes. For instance: if a dry historian were to give an account of Dido's death, he would only say, she was overwhelmed with sorrow after the departure of Æneas; and that she grew weary of her life, so went up to the top of her palace, and, lying down on her funeral pile, she stabbed herself. Now these words would inform you of the fact; but you do not see it. When you read the story in Virgil, he sets it before your eyes. When he represents all the circumstances of Dido's despair; describes her wild rage; and death already staring in her aspect; when he makes her speak at the sight of the picture and sword that Æneas left, your imagination transports you to Carthage; where you see the Trojan fleet leaving the shore, and the queen quite inconsolable. You enter into all her passions, and into the sentiments of the

* See Longinus §. xv.

† Plus est evidentia, vel ut alii dicunt, repræsentatio, quam perspicuitas: et illud quidem patet: hæc se quodammodo ostendit—magna virtus est, res de quibus loquimur, clare atque ut cerni videantur, enunciare. Non enim satis efficit, neque ut debet plene dominatur oratio, si usque ad aures vollet, atque ea sibi iudex de quibus cognoscit, *narrari* credit, non *exprimi*, et *oculis mentis ostendi*—atque hujus summae, iudicio quidem meo, virtutis facillima est via. *Naturam* intueamur, hanc *sequamur*.—

QUINTIL. lib. viii. c. 3.

supposed spectators. It is not Virgil you then hear : you are too attentive to the last words of unhappy Dido, to think of him. The poet disappears : and we see only what he describes ; and hear those only whom he makes to speak. Such is the force of a natural imitation, and of painting in language. Hence it comes that the painters and the poets are so nearly related ; the one paints for the eyes ; and the other for the ears : but both of them ought to convey the liveliest pictures to people's imagination. I have taken an example from a poet to give you a livelier image of what I mean by painting in eloquence : for poets paint in a stronger manner than orators. Indeed the main thing in which poetry differs from eloquence is, that the poet paints with enthusiasm, and gives bolder touches than the orator. But prose allows of painting in a moderate degree : for, without lively descriptions it is impossible to warm the hearer's fancy, or to stir his passions. A plain narrative does not move people : we must not only inform them of facts ; but* strike their sen-

* Τῆς δὲ ῥητορικῆς Φαντασίας κάλλισον αἰ τὸ ἔμπρακτον καὶ ἐνάληθες.---Καλεῖται μὲν γὰρ κοινῶς Φαντασία, πᾶν ἐννόημα λόγου γεννητικὸν ὁπωσοῦν παριστάμενον· ἰδίως δ' ἐπὶ τέττων κεκράτηκε τῆνομα, ὅταν α' λέγῃς ὑπὸ ἐνθουσιασμῆ καὶ πάθος βλέπων δοκῇ, καὶ ὑπ' ὁψιν τιθεῖς τοῖς ἀκροῦσιν—Τί ἔν ἡ ῥητορικῇ Φαντασία δύναται ; πολλὰ μὲν ἴσως καὶ ἄλλα τοῖς λόγοις ἐναγώμα καὶ ἐμπαθῇ προσεισφέρειν·

ses, by a lively, moving representation of the manner and circumstances of the facts we relate.

C. I never reflected on this before. But seeing what you call painting is essential to oratory ; does it not follow that there can be no true eloquence, without a due mixture of poetry ?

A. You are right : only we must exclude versification ; that is, a strict regard to the quantity of syllables, and the order of words in which the poet is obliged to express his thoughts, according to the measure or verse he writes in. Versification indeed, if it be in rhyme, is what injudicious people reckon to be the whole of poetry. Some fancy themselves to be poets, because they have spoken or writ in measured words : but there are many who make verses without poetry : and others are very* poetical without making verses. If therefore we set versifying aside, poetry in

καὶ ἀκρινὰ μὲν μέντοι ταῖς πραγματικαῖς ἐπιχαρήσεσιν,
ὃ πάρα τὸν ἀκροατὴν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δουλεῖται.

LONGINUS, § xv.

* The adventures of Telemachus, composed by our ingenious author, are intirely written in that poetic prose he here speaks of. M. Bossu, the greatest modern critic, does not think that work can be called a poem ; but he owns the distinction that our author here takes notice of. 'There is good reason, says he, to distinguish such artless composures (turned into verse) from true poetry, by giving them the name of versification ; and to make of versification and poetry, as it were, two different arts. And indeed, is there a greater difference betwixt grammar and rhetoric, than betwixt the art of making verses, and that of inventing a poem?'

Traite du poeme epique. liv. i. ch. 5.

other respects is only a lively fiction that paints nature. And if one has not this genius for painting, he will never be able to imprint things on the hearer's mind : but his discourse will be flat, languid, and wearisome. Ever since the fall of Adam, men's thoughts have been so low and grovelling, that they are unattentive to moral truths ; and can scarce conceive any thing but what affects their senses. In this consists the degeneracy of human nature. People grow soon weary of contemplation : intellectual ideas do not strike their imagination: so that we must use sensible and* familiar images to support their attention, and convey abstracted truths to their minds. Hence it came, that soon after the fall, the religion of all the ancients consisted of poetry and idolatry ; which were always joined together in their various schemes of superstition. But let us not wander too far—you see plainly that poetry, I mean, the lively painting of things, is, as it were, the very soul of eloquence.

C. But if true orators be poets ; I should think that poets are orators too : for poetry is very proper to persuade.

A. Yes ; they have the very same end. All the difference betwixt them consists in what I have told you. Orators are not possessed with that enthusiasm which fires the poet's breast, and renders him more lively,

* *Respicere exemplar vitæ morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatore, et veras hinc ducere voces.*
HOR. de A. P.

more sublime, and bolder in expression. You remember the passage I quoted from Cicero.

C. Which? is it not—

A. That an orator ought to have the style almost of a poet: that almost points out the difference between them.

C. I understand you. But you do not come to the point you proposed to explain to us.

A. Which?

C. The rule for distinguishing betwixt witty turns and solid ornaments.

A. You will soon comprehend that. For of what use in discourse can any ornament be, that does not tend either to prove, to paint, or to affect?

C. It may serve to please.

A. We must distinguish here between such ornaments as only please; and those that both please and persuade. That which serves to please in order to persuade, is good and solid: thus we are pleased with strong and clear arguments. The just and natural emotions of an orator have much grace and beauty in them: and his exact and lively painting charms us. So that all the necessary parts of eloquence are apt to please: but yet pleasing is not their true aim. The question is, whether we shall approve such thoughts and expressions as may perhaps give an amusing delight; but in other respects, are altogether useless: and these I call quaint turns, and points of wit. You must remem-

ber now that I allow all those graces of style, and delicate thoughts that tend to persuasion: I only reject those vain, affected ornaments that the self-conceited author uses, to paint his own character, and amuse others with his wit; instead of filling their minds entirely with his subject. In fine; I think we ought to condemn not only all jingle and playing with words, as a thing extremely mean and boyish; but even all witty conceits, and fanciful turns; I mean, such thoughts as only flash and glitter upon the fancy; but contain nothing that is solid, and conducive to persuasion.

C. I could agree to that; but that I am afraid such severity would retrench the chief beauties of discourse.

A. Do not you reckon Homer and Virgil very agreeable authors? are they not the most delicate you ever read? and yet in them you do not find what we call points of wit. Their poems are full of a noble simplicity: their art is entirely concealed: * nature itself appears in all that they say. We do not find a single word that seems purposely designed to shew the poet's wit. They thought it their great-

- * When first young *Maro* sung of kings and wars,
'Ere warning *Phœbus* touch'd his trembling ears,
Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,
And but from nature's fountains scorn'd to draw:
But when t' examine every part he came,
Nature and *Homer*, were, he found, the same.
Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
To copy nature is to copy them.

POPE.

est glory never to appear ; but to employ our attention on the objects they describe : as a painter endeavours to set before your eyes wide forests, mountains, rivers, distant views, and buildings ; or the adventures, actions, and different passions of men, in such a lively manner, that you cannot trace the masterly strokes of his pencil : for art looks mean and coarse when it is perceived. Plato (who had examined this matter more thoroughly than any other orator, or critic,) assures us that in composing, the poet should always keep out of sight, make himself be quite forget by his readers, and represent only those things and persons which he would set before their eyes. You see how much the ancients excelled us in just and lofty sentiments.

B. I see the use and necessity of painting, in eloquence : let us next know the nature and use of those affecting movements you spoke of.

A. They serve to raise in the hearer's mind, such emotions as answer the orator's purpose.

C. But in what do these movements of an orator consist ?

A. In his words, and in the actions of his body.

B. What movement can there be in words?

A. A great deal. Tully tells us, that the very enemies of Gracchus could not forbear weeping when* he pronounced these words

* *Quid fuit in Graccho, quem tu, Catule, melius meministi, quod me puero tantopere ferretur? quo me miser conferam? quo vertam? in Capitoliumne? at fratris sanguine redundat.*

—‘Miserable man that I am ! Whither shall I turn myself ? Where can I go ? to the Capitol ? it swims with my brother’s blood. Shall I go to my own house ? there to see my unhappy mother dissolved in tears, and oppressed with sorrow ?’ This is moving language. But now if one were to say the same things in a cold manner, they would lose all their force.

B. Think you so ?

A. Let us try. ‘I know not where to go, nor whither I should turn myself, amidst my misfortunes. The Capitol is the place where my brother’s blood was shed : and at home, I shall see my unhappy mother lamenting her condition, with the utmost grief.’ This is the same thing that was said before : but what is become of that force and vivacity we then perceived ? Where is that* vehement manner, and abrupt language which so justly describes nature in the transports of grief ? The manner of saying a thing shews us how it affects the mind : and that is what most effectually touches the hearer. In such passages, one ought studiously to avoid all refined, uncommon thoughts ; and even neglect connexion and order : otherwise the passion described has no appearance of truth, or nature, in it.

An domum ? matremne ut miseram lamentantemque videam, et abjectam ? quæ sic ab illo acta esse constabat oculis, voce, gestu, inimici ut lachrymas tenere non possent. Hæc eo dico pluribus, quod genus hoc totum oratores, qui sunt veritatis ipsius actores, reliquerunt ; imitatores autem veritatis, histriones, occupaverunt. Cic. de Orat. lib. iii. §. 36.

* See Longinus, §. xviii.

* 7

Nothing is more shocking than a passion expressed in beautiful figures, pompous language, and well turned periods. On this head I must recommend* Longinus to you, who quotes many sublime examples from Demosthenes and others.

C. Besides the movements that attend an affecting, vehement style, you mentioned others that flow from the orator's gesture and action: which I must entreat you to explain.

A. I cannot pretend to give you a complete system of rhetoric. It is a task I am not fit for. However I shall give you some remarks I have made on the point of gesture, we find in Tully and† Quintilian that the action of the Greeks and Romans was far more violent than ours. They stamped on the ground; and even beat their forehead. Tully mentions an orator who in his pleading laid hold of his client, and tore open his clothes, to shew the judges the wounds he had received in the service of the republic. This was a vehement kind of action indeed; but such as is reserved for extraordinary occasions; and doth not fall within the common rules of gesture. I think it is not natural to be always moving one's arm in talking: that‡ motion is proper

* See Longinus, §. xviii, xix, xx, xxi.

† Femur ferire, quod Athenis primus fecisse creditur Cleon, et usitatum est, et indignatos decet, et excitat auditorem. Idque in Callidio Cicero desiderat. *Non frons, inquit, percussa? non femur? pedum nulla supplotio?* Quint.

‡ Brachii moderata projectio remissis humeris, atque explicantibus se in proferenda manu digitis, continuos et decurrentes locos maxime decet. *Ibid,*

enough when the orator is very vehement: but he ought not to move his arm in order to appear vehement. Nay there are many things that ought to be pronounced calmly, and without any motion.

B. Would you have a preacher, for instance, use no gesture at all on some occasions? that would look very strange indeed.

A. I know that most people lay it down for a rule, (or a custom at least,) that a preacher should be always in motion, whatever the subject be that he treats of. But it might be easily shewn that our [French] preachers usually have too much gesture, and sometimes too little.

B. I wish you would state this matter clearly. For I always believed, from the example of *** that there are not above two or three motions of the hands to be used in a whole sermon.

A. Let us then lay down some principle to argue upon. Now of what use is the* action of the body in speaking? Is it not to express the sentiments and passions of the mind?

* *Actio inquam in dicendo una dominatur: sine hac summus orator esse in numero nullo potest: mediocris, hac instructus summos saepe superare. Huic primas dedisse Demosthenes dicitur, quum rogaretur quid in dicendo esset primum; huic secundas; huic tertias. De Orat. lib. iii. §. 56. Est enim actio quasi sermo corporis; quo magis menti congrua esse debet—atque in iis omnibus quae sunt actionis, inest quaedam vis a natura data: quare etiam hac imperiti, hac vulgus, hac denique barbari maxime commoventur—iisdem enim omnium animi motibus concitantur, et eos iisdem notis, et in aliis agnoscunt, et in se ipsi indicant. Ibid. §. 54.*

B. I think so.

A. The motion of the body then should help to paint the thoughts of the soul.

B. Yes.

A. And that painting ought to be exact and† faithful. Every look and motion should in an easy, natural manner represent the speaker's sentiments, and the nature of the things he says ; but so as to avoid all mean and theatrical gestures.

B. I think I understand your notion exactly. Let me interrupt you then a little ; that you may see how far I enter into the consequences that flow from the principle you laid down. You† would have an orator use such a lively, natural, becoming action, as will help to point out distinctly what his words alone could express only in a flat and languid manner. So that you reckon his very action a sort of painting.

A. Right. But we must farther conclude that to paint well, we must imitate nature ; and observe what she does when she is left to herself ; and is not constrained by art.

† *Omnis enim motus animi suum quendam a natura habet vultum et sonum, et gestum : totumque corpus hominis, et ejus omnis vultus omnesque voces, ut nervi in fidibus, ita sonant, ut a motu animi quoque sint pulsae.* CICERO.

‡ *Gestus quantum habeat in oratore momenti, satis vel ex eo patet quod pleraque etiam citra verba significat. Quippe non manus solum, sed nutus etiam declarant nostram voluntatem ; et in mutis pro sermone sunt—contra si gestus ac vultus ab oratione dissentiat, tristia dicamus hilares, affirmemus aliqua renuentes, non auctoritas modo verbis, sed etiam fides desit.* Quint. lib. xi. c. 3.

B. That is plain.

A. Now doth a man naturally use many gestures when he says common things, without vehemence, or the least mixture of any sort of passion?

B. No.

A. On such common subjects then, we ought not to use any action in public discourses; or at least but little: for there we ought always to† follow nature; nay there are some occasions where an orator might best express his thoughts by silence. For, if, being full of some great sentiment, he continued immoveable for a moment; this surprising pause would keep the minds of the audience in suspense, and express an emotion too big for words to utter.

B. I doubt not but such unexpected pauses seasonably employed, would be very significant; and powerfully affect the hearers. But, Sir, you seem to think that one who speaks in public ought to use no other action than what is proper for ordinary conversation.

A. You mistake me, Sir; I think the sight of a great assembly, and the importance of the subject an orator treats of, ought to animate him far more than if he were talking

† Unum jam his adjiciendum est, cum praecepue in actione spectetur *decorum*, saepe aliud alios decere. Est enim latens quaedam in hoc ratio, et inenarrabilis: et ut vere hoc dictum est caput esse artis, decere quod facias—quare norit se quisque; nec tantum ex communibus praeceptis, sed etiam ex natura sua capiat consilium formandae actionis. Quint. lib. xi. c. 3.

familiarly with his friends. But both in private and in public, he ought always to act naturally. He should use some action when his words are moving: but when his expressions are quite calm and simple, there is no occasion to move the body; except it be in the gentlest manner. Nothing appears more shocking and absurd, than to see a man very warm and active, when he is saying the driest, coldest things. Though he sweats himself, he chills the blood of his audience. Some time ago, I happened to fall asleep at a sermon, as you know one is apt to do in the afternoon: (and indeed in former times, they preached but once a-day, after the gospel in the morning service:) but I soon waked and found the preacher in a very violent agitation, so that I fancied, at first, that he was pressing some important point of morality—

B. What was the matter then?

A. He was only giving notice that on the Sunday following he would preach upon repentance. I was extremely surprised to hear such an indifferent thing uttered with so much vehemence; and must have laughed out, if the regard I had for the place, and some other circumstances had not restrained me. The pronounciation of these declaimers is exactly like their gesture: for, as their voice is a perpetual monotony; so there is an* uni-

* In the delivering of sermons, a great composure of gesture and behaviour is necessary to give them weight and authority. Extremes are bad here, as in every thing else.

formity in their gesture that is no less nauseous and unnatural ; and equally contrary to the good effect that one might expect from decent action.

B. You said that sometimes they have not action enough.

A. We cannot wonder at that. For they do not discern the things that require warmth and earnestness. They waste their spirits in saying the plainest things ; and so are forced to utter those things faintly which ought to be delivered with a vehement action. I must own indeed that the French are not very capable of this vehemence : for, they are too airy, and do not conceive things with sufficient strength : and therefore they do not speak with a proper energy. The Romans had a wonderful talent this way, and the Greeks a greater. The eastern nations excelled in it ; and particularly the Hebrews. Nothing can

Some affect a light and flippant behaviour : and others think that wry faces, and a tone in the voice will set off the matter. Grave and composed looks, and a natural, but distinct pronunciation, will always have the best effects. The great rule which the masters of rhetoric press much, can never be enough remembered, that to make a man speak well, and pronounce with a right *emphasis*, he ought thoroughly to understand all that he says ; be fully persuaded of it ; and bring himself to have those affections which he desires to infuse into others. He that is persuaded of the truth of what he says, and has a concern about it in his mind, will pronounce with a natural vehemence that is far more lively than all the strains that art can lead him to. An orator, (if we hearken to them) must be an honest man, and speak always on the side of truth ; and study to feel all that he says ; and then he will speak it so as to make others feel it likewise.

Discourse of the pastoral care. Ch. ix.

equal the strength and vivacity of the figures they employed in their discourse ; and the very actions they used to express their sentiments ; such as putting ashes on their heads, and tearing their garments, and covering themselves with sackcloth, under any deep distress and sorrow of mind. I do not speak of what the prophets did to give a more lively representation of the things they foretold ; because such figurative actions were the effect of divine inspiration. But even in other cases, we find that those people understood much better than we do, how to express their grief, and fear, and other passions. And hence, no doubt, arose those surprising effects of eloquence, which we never experience now.

B. You approve then of many different gestures, and* various inflections of the voice ?

A. It is that variety which gives so much grace and force to the action of an orator ; and made Demosthenes far excel all others. The more easy and familiar that the voice and action appear, when the speaker only narrates, explains, or instructs, the more apt he will be to surprise and move the audience in those

* In omni voce, est quiddam medium ; sed suum cuique : hinc gradatim adscendere vocem utile, et suave est : (nam a principio clamare agreste quiddam est :) et illud idem ad formandum est vocem salutare : deinde est quiddam contentius extremum.—est item contra quiddam in remissione gravissimum, quoque tamquam sonorum gradibus descenditur. Hæc varietas, et hic per omnes sonos vocis cursus, et se tuabitur, et actioni afferet suavitatem. *CIC. de Orat. lib. iii. §. 61.*

parts of his discourse, where he grows suddenly vehement, and enforces lofty, affecting sentiments by a suitable energy of voice, and action. This due* pronounciation is a kind of music ; whose beauty consists in the variety of proper tones and inflections of the voice, which ought to rise or fall with a just and easy cadence, according to the nature of the things we express. It gives a light as well as a grace to language ; and is the very life and spirit of discourse.

B. According to your notions of elocution, it is an art unknown to our greatest orators. The preacher that you and I heard, about a fortnight ago, did not observe your rule : nor even seem to endeavour it. Except the first thirty words of his sermon, he spake always in the same tone : and the only sign I could

* Ornata est pronuntiatio, cui suffragatur vox facilis, magna, beata, flexibilis, firma, dulcis, durabilis, clara, pura, secans æra, auribus sedens. Est enim quædam ad auditum accommodata, non magnitudine sed proprietate, ad hoc velut tractabilis ; utique habens omnes in se qui desiderantur sonos *intentionesque*, et toto ut aiunt organo instructa—illud vero maximum, quod secundum *rationem rerum* de quibus dicimus, animorumque habitus, *conformanda vox* est, ne ab oratione discordet. Vitemus igitur illam quæ Græce *μωνοτονία* vocatur, una quædam spiritus ac soni intentio : non solum ne dicamus clamose, quod insanum est ; aut intra loquendi modum, quod motu caret ; aut summisso murmure, quo etiam debilitatur omnis intentio : sed ut in iisdem partibus, iisdemque affectibus, sint tamen quædam non ita magnæ vocis *declinationes*, prout aut verborum dignitas, aut sententiarum natura, aut depositio, aut inceptio, aut transitus postulabit : ut qui singulis pinxerunt coloribus, alia tamen eminentiora, alia reductioniora fecerunt ; sine quo ne membris quidem suas lineas dedissent. Quint. lib. xi. c. 3.

perceive of his being more vehement in some parts of his discourse, than in others, was, that when he seemed earnest, he spoke faster than at other times.

A. To me, Sir, his voice seemed to have two tones; though they were well adapted to his words. You observed justly enough that he did not follow the rules of pronunciation: and I believe he did not perceive the need of them. His voice is naturally melodious: and though it be ill managed, it is however pleasing enough. But you see plainly that it does not make those strong, affecting impressions on the mind that it would produce, if it had such various inflections as are proper to express the speaker's sentiments. Such preachers are like fine clocks, that give a clear, full, soft, agreeable sound; but after all they are clocks only, of no significancy: and having no variety of notes, they are incapable of harmony or eloquence.

B. But were there not many graces in the rapidity of his discourse?

A. Yes: and I grant that in some affecting, lively passages one ought to speak faster than usual. But it is a great fault to speak with so much precipitation that one cannot stop himself, nor be distinctly understood. The voice and action bear some resemblance to verse. Sometimes we must use such a slow, and grave measure as is fit to describe things of that character: and sometimes a short, impetuous one, to express what is quick and ardent. To use always the same

degree of action, and the same tone of voice, is like prescribing one remedy for all distempers. But we ought to excuse the uniformity of that preacher's voice and action. For, besides his possessing many excellent qualities, the fault we complain of, is the natural effect of his style. We have already agreed that the modulation of the voice should be exactly suited to the words. Now his style is even, and uniform, without the least variety. On the one hand, it is not familiar, insinuating, and popular; and on the other, it has nothing in it that is lively, figurative, and sublime: but it consists of a constant flow of words, that press one after the other; containing a close and well-connected chain of reasoning, on clear ideas. In a word he is a man that talks good sense very correctly. Nay we must acknowledge that he has done great service to the pulpit: he has rescued it from the servitude of vain declaimers; and filled it himself with much strength and dignity. He is very capable of convincing people: but I know few preachers who persuade and move them less than he doth. If you observe carefully, you will even find that his way of preaching is not very instructive, for, besides his not having a familiar, engaging, pathetic manner of talking (as I observed before;) his discourse does not in the least* strike the

* The senses and the imagination are fruitful and inexhaustible sources of mistakes and delusion: but the understanding or mind acting by itself, is not so subject to error—we

imagination, but is addressed to the understanding only. It is a thread of reasoning that cannot be comprehended without the closest attention. And seeing there are but few hearers capable of such a constant application of mind, they retain little or nothing of his discourse. It is like a torrent that hurries along at once, and leaves its channel dry. In order to make a lasting impression on people's minds, we must support their attention, by moving their passions: for, dry instructions can have but little influence. But the thing that I reckon least natural in this preacher, is the continual motion he gives his arms; while there is nothing figurative, nor moving in his words. The action used in ordinary conversation, would suit his style best: or his impetuous gesture would require a style full of sallies and vehemence: and even then he behoved to manage his warmth better, and render it less uniform. In fine, I think he is a great man; but not an orator. A

cannot always speak so as to affect the senses and imagination of others: nor ought we always to endeavour it. When a subject is *abstracted*, we can seldom render it *sensible* (or apt to strike the imagination,) without making it obscure: it is enough if it be made *intelligible*. Nothing can be more unjust than the usual complaints of those who would know every thing: and yet will not apply themselves to any thing. They take it amiss when we require their attention; and expect that we should always *strike* their fancy, and continually please their senses, and their passions. But it is not in our power to gratify them. The authors of romances and comedies, are obliged thus to please and amuse them: but as for us, it is enough if we can instruct those who are truly attentive.

P. Malbranche's recherche de la verite. lio. iii. c. i.

country preacher who can alarm his hearers, and draw tears from them, answers the end of eloquence better than he.

B. But how shall we know the particular gestures, and the inflections of voice that are agreeable to nature?

A. I told you before that the whole art of good orators consists in observing what nature does when unconstrained. You ought not to imitate those haranguers who choose always to declaim; but will never talk to their hearers. On the contrary, you should address yourself to an audience in such a modest, respectful, engaging manner, that each of them shall think you are speaking to him in particular. And this is the use and advantage of natural, familiar, insinuating tones of voice. They ought always to be grave and becoming: and even strong and pathetic, when the subject requires it. But you must not fancy that you can express the passions by the mere strength of voice: like those noisy speakers who by bawling and tossing themselves about, stun their hearers, instead of affecting them. If we would succeed in painting, and raising the passions; we must know exactly what movements they inspire. For instance, observe what is the posture, and what the voice of one, whose heart is pierced with sorrow, or surprised at the sight of an astonishing object: remark the natural action of the eyes; what the hands do; and what the whole body. On such oc-

easions nature appears ; and you need only follow it : if you must employ* art, conceal it so well under an exact imitation, that it may pass for nature itself. But to speak the truth, orators in such cases, are like poets who write elegies or other passionate verses ; they must† feel the passion they describe, else they can never paint it well. The greatest art imaginable can never speak like‡ true passion, and undisguised nature. So that you will always be but an imperfect orator, if you be not thoroughly moved with those sentiments that you paint, and would infuse into others. Nor do I say this from a pious motive : I speak now only as an orator.

* Τότε γὰρ ἡ τέχνη τέλει, ἡνὶκ' ἀν Φύσις εἶναι δοκῇ· ἡ δ' αὖ Φύσις ἐπιτυχής, ὅταν λαμβάνουσα περιέχη τὴν τέχνην. Longinus, §. xxi.

† Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adsunt
Humani vultus. Si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi—

—male si mandata loqueris,

Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo. Tristia mœstum
Vultum verba decent ; iratum plena minarum.
Format enim natura prius nos intus ad omnem
Fortunarum habitum ; juvat, aut impellit ad iram,
Aut ad humum mœrore gravi deducit, et angit :
Post effert animi motus interprete lingua.

Hor. de A. P.

‡ Θαρρῶν γὰρ ἀφορισαίμην ἂν ὡς εἶδέν ἔτιωε
ὡς τὸ γενναῖον πάθος ἐνθα χρὴ μεγάληγορον, ὥσπερ
ὑπὸ μανίας τινός, καὶ πνεύματος ἐνθεσιαστικῆς ἐκπνέ-
ον, καὶ οἰονά Φαιδῶν τὸς λόγους.

LONGINUS, §. viii.

§ Neque fieri potest, ut doleat is qui audit, ut odenit, ut invidet, ut pertimescat aliquid, nisi omnes ii motus quos orator adhibere volet iudici, in ipso oratore impressi, atque

B. The case, I think, is abundantly plain: but you spoke to us of the eyes: have they their rhetoric too?

A. Yes; if you will believe* Tully, and other ancient orators. Nothing is more intelligible than the aspect: it expresses every passion of the soul. And in the aspect, the eyes are most active and significant. One well-timed look will pierce to the bottom of the heart.

B. The preacher we were speaking of, has usually his eyes shut. When we observe him near, it is very shocking.

A. It is disagreeable because we perceive that he wants one of the chief things that ought to enliven his discourse.

B. But why does he so?

A. He makes haste to pronounce his words; and shuts his eyes, because it helps his labouring memory.

B. I observed indeed that it was very much burdened: sometimes he repeated sev-

inusti videbuntur—ut enim nulla materies tam facilis ad exardescendum est, quæ nisi admoto igni ignem concipere possit: sic nulla mens est tam ad comprehendendam vim oratoris parata, quæ possit incendi, nisi inflammatus ipse ad eam et ardens accesseris. CIC. *de Orat. lib. ii. §. 45.*

* Sed in ore sunt omnia. In eo autem ipso dominatus est omnis *oculorum*—animi enim est omnis actio; et imago animi vultus est, indices oculi. Nam hæc est una pars corporis quæ quot animi motus sunt, tot significationes, et commutationes possit efficere—oculi sunt quorum tum intentione, tum remissione, tum conjectu, tum hilaritate motus animorum significemus apte cum genere ipso orationis: est enim actio quasi *sermo corporis*; quo magis menti congruens esse debet.—Quare in hac nostra actione secundum vocem vultus valet: is autem oculis gubernatur. CIC. *de Orat. lib. iii. §. 39.*

eral words to find out the thread of his discourse. Such repetitions make one look like a careless school-boy that has forgot his lesson. They are very disagreeable; and would not be easily excused in a preacher of less note.

A. It is not so much the preacher's fault as the defect of the method he follows, after many others. So long as men preach by heart, and often, they will be apt to fall into this perplexity.

B. How do you mean? Would you have us not preach by heart? Without doing so, one could not make an exact, pithy discourse.

A. I am not against a preacher's getting some particular sermons by heart. They may always have time enough to prepare themselves for extraordinary occasions. And they might even acquit themselves handsomely without such great preparation.

B. How? This seems incredible.

A. If I be mistaken, I shall readily own it. Let us only examine the point without prepossession. What is the chief aim of an orator? Is it not to persuade? And in order to this, ought he not to affect his hearers, by moving their passions?

B. I grant it.

A. The most lively and moving way of preaching is therefore the best.

B. True: what do you conclude from that?

A. Which of two orators will have the

most powerful and affecting manner ; he who learns his discourse by heart ; or he who speaks without reciting word for word what he had studied ?

B. He, I think, who has got his discourse by heart.

A. Have patience : and let us state the question right. On the one hand, I suppose a man prepares his discourse exactly, and learns it by heart to the least syllable. On the other hand, I suppose another person who fills his mind with the subject he is to talk of ; who speaks with great ease ; (for, you would not have any body* attempt to speak in public, without having proper talents for it :) in short, a man who has attentively considered all the principles, and parts of the subject he is to handle ; and has a comprehensive view of them in all their extent ; who has reduced his thoughts into a proper method ; and prepared the strongest expressions to explain and enforce them in a sensible manner ; who ranges all his arguments, and has a sufficient number of affecting figures : such a man certainly knows every thing that he ought to say ; and the order in which the whole should be placed ; † to succeed therefore in his delivery,

* —Ego nec studium sine divite vena,

Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium—Hor. *de A. P.*

† He then that would prepare himself to be a preacher in this method, must accustom himself to talk freely to himself, to let his thoughts flow from him ; especially when he feels an edge and heat upon his mind : for then happy expressions will come in his mouth—he must also be writing essays up-

he wants nothing but those common expressions that must make the bulk of his discourse. But do you believe now that such a person would have any difficulty in finding easy, familiar expressions?

B. He could not find such just and handsome ones as he might have hit on, if he had sought them leisurely in his closet.

A. I own that. But according to you, he would lose only a few ornaments: and you know how to rate that loss according to the principles we laid down before. On the other side, what advantage must he not have in the freedom and force of his action: which is the main thing. Supposing that he has applied himself much to composing, (as* Cicero re-

on all sorts of subjects; for by writing he will bring himself to a correctness both in thinking and in speaking: and thus by a hard practice for two or three years, a man may render himself such a *master* in this way, that he can never be surprised; nor will new thoughts ever dry up upon him. He must talk over himself the whole *body* of divinity; and accustom himself to explain, and prove; to clear objections; and to apply every part of it to some *practical* use—and if in these his meditations, happy thoughts, and noble, tender expressions, do at any time offer themselves, he must not lose them; but write them down—by a very few years practice of two or three of such soliloquies a-day, chiefly in the morning when the head is clearest, and the spirits are liveliest, a man will contract a great easiness both in thinking, and speaking.

Bp. Burnet's disc. on the pastoral care, p. 210, 211.

* Caput autem est, quod (ut vere dicam) minime facimus, (est enim magni laboris, quem plerique fugimus) quam plurimum scribere—stilus optimus, et præstantissimus dicendi effector, ac magister; neque injuria: nam si subitam et fortuitam orationem, commentatio, et cogitatio facile vincit; hanc ipsam profecto assidua ac diligens scriptura superabit.

De Orat. lib. i. §. 38.

quires of an orator,) that he has read all the best models ; and has a natural or acquired easiness of style and speech ; that he has abundance of solid knowledge and learning ; that he understands his subject perfectly well ; and has ranged all the parts and proofs of it in his head : in such a case we must conclude that he will speak with force, and* order, and readiness. His periods perhaps will not sooth the ear so much as the others ; and for that reason he must be the better orator. His transitions may not be so fine : it is no great matter : though these he might have prepared without getting them by heart : besides, these little omissions were common to the most eloquent orators among the ancients. They thought such negligence was very natural ; and ought even to be imitated, to avoid the appearance of too great preparation. What then could our orator want ? He might make some little repetition : but that too must have its use. Not only will the judicious hearer take a pleasure in observing nature here, which leads one often to resume whatever view of the subject strikes strongest upon the mind : but likewise this repetition imprints the truth more deeply ; which is the best manner of instruction. At the worst, one might find in his discourse some inaccuracy

*—cui lecta potenter erit res,
Nec facundia deferit hunc, nec lucidus ordo.
Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.

Hor. de A. P.

of construction, some obsolete word that has been censured by the academy ; something that is irregular ; or, if you will, some weak or misapplied expression that he may happen to drop in the warmth of action. But surely they must have narrow souls who can think such little escapes worth any one's notice. There is abundance of these to be met with in the most* excellent originals. The greatest orators among the ancients neglected them : and if our views were as noble as theirs, we should not so much regard those† trifles, which can amuse none but such as are not able to discern and pursue what is truly great. Excuse my freedom, Sir : if I did not think you had a genius very different from these little, cavilling critics I condemn, I should speak of them with greater caution.

B. You may always speak your mind, Sir, without any reserve on my account. Be

* Παρατεθεμένος δ' ἐν ὀλίγα καὶ αὐτὸς ἀμαρτήματα, καὶ Ὀμηρος, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσοι μέγιστοι, καὶ ἤνισα τοῖς πλάισμασιν ἀρχόμενος, ὅμως δὲ ἐχκαρτημαῖα μᾶλλον αὐτὰ ἐνέσια καλῶν, ἢ παροράματα δι' ἀμέλειαν, ἀκῆ πρ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν ὑπὸ μεγαλοφύας ἀνεπιστάτως παρενηνεγμένα·

LONGINUS, §. xxxiii.

† Sunt delicta tamen, quibus ignovisse velimus :

Nam neque chorda sonum reddit quem vult manus et mens ;

Poscentique gravem persæpe remittit acutum :

Nec semper feriet quodcunque minabitur arcus.

Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis

Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,

Aut humana parum cavit natura——

Hor. de A. P.

pleased therefore to go on with your comparison.

A. Consider then, in the next place, the advantages that a preacher must have who does not get his sermon by heart. He is entirely master of himself : he speaks in an easy unaffected way ; and not like a formal declaimer. Things flow then from their proper source. If he has a natural talent for eloquence, his language must be lively and moving : even* the warmth that animates him, must lead him to such pertinent expressions and figures, as he could not have found out by study.

B. Why ? Surely a man may enliven his fancy, and compose very sprightly discourses in his closet.

* But the rule I have observed last, is the most necessary of all : and without it all the rest will never do the business : it is this : that a man must have in himself a deep sense of the truth and power of religion : he must have a life and flame in his thoughts with relation to these subjects : he must have felt himself those things which he intends to explain and recommend to others. He must observe narrowly the motions of his own mind ;—that so he may have a lively heat in himself when he speaks of them ; and that he may speak in so sensible a manner, that it may be almost *felt* that he speaks from his heart. There is an authority in the simplest things that can be said, when they carry visible characters of genuineness in them. Now if a man can carry on this method, and by much meditation and prayer, draw down divine influences, which are always to be expected when a man puts himself in the way of them, and prepares himself for them ; he will always feel that *while he is musing a fire is kindled* within him ; and then he will speak with authority, and without constraint : his thoughts will be true, and his expressions free and easy.

Discourse of the pastoral care, p. 111, 112

A. I own that : but a just elocution and gesture must still give them a greater life and spirit. Besides, what one says in the ardour of action is far more natural and affecting : it has a negligent air ; and discovers none of that art which is visible in all elaborate composures. We may add farther, that a skilful experienced orator* adapts things to the capacity of his hearers ; and varies his discourse according to the impression he sees it makes upon their minds. For, he easily perceives whether they understand him, or not ; and whether he gains their attention, and moves their hearts : and if it be needful, he resumes the same things in a different manner, and sets them in another light : he clothes them in more familiar images, and comparisons : or he goes back to the plainest principles, from which he gradually deduces the truths he would enforce : or he endeavours to cure those passions, that hinder the truth from making a due impression. This is the true art of instruction and persuasion : and without this address and presence of mind, we can only make roving and fruitless declamations. Observe now how far the orator who gets every thing by heart, falls short of the other's success. If we suppose then a man to preach

* Erit igitur hæc facultas in eo quem volumus esse eloquentem, ut definire rem possit ; neque id faciat tam presse et anguste, quam in illis eruditissimis disputationibus fieri solet, sed cum explanatius, tum etiam uberius, et ad commune iudicium, *popularemque intelligentiam* accommodatius.

Cic. *Orat.* §. 33.

who depends entirely on his memory, and dares not pronounce a word different from his lesson ; his style will be very exact : but, as Dionysius Halicarnassius observes of Isocrates, his composition must please more when it is read, than when it is pronounced. Besides, let him take what pains he will, the inflexions of his voice will be too uniform ; and always a little constrained. He is not like a man that speaks to an audience ; but like a rhetorician who recites or declaims. His action must be awkward and forced : by fixing his eyes too much, he shews how much his memory labours in his delivery : and he is afraid to give way to an unusual emotion, least he should lose the thread of his discourse. Now the hearer perceiving such an undisguised art, is so far from being touched and captivated, as he ought to be, that he observes the speaker's artifice with coldness and neglect.

B. But did not the ancient orators do what you condemn ?

A. I believe not.

B. What ! do you think that Demosthenes and Tully did not learn by heart those finished orations they have left us ?

A. We know very well that they composed and wrote their harangues, before they spake in public : but we have several reasons to believe that they did not get them by heart, word for word. Even the orations of Demosthenes, as we have them, shew rather the sub-

limity and vehemence of a great genius that was accustomed to speak powerfully of public affairs ; than the accuracy and politeness of an author. As for Cicero, in several places of his harangues, we find things spoken on sudden emergencies, that he could not possibly have foreseen. And if we take his * opinion of this matter ; he thinks an orator ought to have a great memory : and he even speaks of an artificial kind of memory as an useful invention ; but all he says on this point does not imply that we ought to learn every word by heart. On the contrary, he seems only to require, that we should range all the parts of a discourse exactly in our memory, and prepare the figures and chief expressions we are to use ; so as to be ready to add off-hand whatever may occasionally be suggested from a view of the audience, or unexpected accidents. And it is for this reason, that he requires so much application and presence of mind in an orator.

B. You must allow me to tell you, Sir, that all this does not convince me : for I cannot believe that one can speak so very well,

* Sed verborum memoria, quæ *minus* est nobis necessaria, majore imaginum varietate distinguitur : multa enim sunt verba. Quæ quasi articuli connectunt *membra* orationis, quæ formari similitudine nulla possunt : *eorum* fingenda nobis sunt *imagines*, quibus semper utamur. Rerum memoria, propria est oratoris : eam singulis personis bene positis notare possumus, ut *sententias* imaginibus, *ordinem* locis comprehendamus.

De Orat. lib. ii. §. 88.

without having prepared and adjusted all his expressions.

C. The reason why it is so hard to persuade you in this case, is, because you judge of the matter by common experience. If they who get their sermons by heart, were to preach without that preparation, it is likely they would succeed but very ill : nor am I surprised at it : for, they are not accustomed to follow nature : they have studied only to compose their sermons ; and that too with affectation. They have never once thought of* speaking in a noble, strong, and natural manner. Indeed the greatest part of preachers have not a

* This leads me to consider the difference that is between the reading, and the speaking of sermons. Reading is peculiar to this nation ; and is endured in no other. It has indeed made our sermons more exact ; and so has produced to us many volumes of the best that are extant. But after all, though some few read so happily, pronounce so truly, and enter so entirely into those affections which they recommend ; that in them, we see both the correctness of reading, and the seriousness of speaking sermons ; yet every one is not so happy. Some by hanging their head perpetually over their notes, by blundering as they read ; and by a cursory running over them, do so lessen the matter of their sermons, that as they are generally read with very little life or affection, so they are heard with as little regard, or esteem. Those who read, ought certainly to be at a little more pains, than (for the most part) they are to read true ; to pronounce with an emphasis ; to raise their head, and to direct their eyes to their hearers : and if they practised more, alone, the just way of reading, they might deliver their sermons with much more advantage. Man is a low sort of creature : he does not (nay the greater part cannot,) consider things in themselves, without those little seasonings that must recommend them to their affections—besides, the people (who are too apt to censure the clergy) are easily carried into an obvious reflection on reading that it is an effect of laziness. Discourse of the pastoral care. *ch. ix.*

sufficient fund of solid knowledge to depend on, and are therefore afraid to trust themselves without the usual preparation. The method of getting sermons by heart, qualifies many, who have but very scanty and superficial parts, to make a tolerable figure in the pulpit ; seeing they need only lay together a certain number of passages and remarks : and however little genius or assistance a man has, he may with time and application be able to work up and polish his matter into some form. But to preach with judgment and strength requires an attentive meditation upon the first principles of religion ; an exact knowledge of morality ; an insight into antiquity ; strength of reasoning ; and suitable action. Is not this, Sir, what you require in an orator who does not learn his discourse by heart ?

A. You have explained my thoughts exactly. Only it may not be improper to add, that though a man should not possess all these qualities in a remarkable degree, he may yet preach very well, if he has a solid judgment, a tolerable stock of knowledge, and an easy way of speaking. For, in this method, as in the other, there may be different degrees of eloquence. You may further observe that most of those two preach without getting their sermons by heart, do not prepare themselves enough. They ought to study their subject with the closest attention ; prepare all those moving passages that should affect the

audience ; and give the several parts of their discourse such an order as will best serve to set the whole in the most proper light.

B. You have oftentimes spoken of this order : do you mean any thing else by it than a division of the subject ? Perhaps you have some peculiar notion on this point too.

A. You think that you rally me : but in good earnest, I am as singular in my opinion upon this head, as on any other.

B. I easily believe you.

A. It is certainly so : and since we have fallen upon this subject, I will shew you how far I think the greater part of orators are defective in the point of order.

B. Since you are so fond of order, I hope you do not dislike divisions.

A. I am far from approving them.

B. Why ? Do they not methodise a discourse ?

A. For the most part, divisions give only a seeming order ; while they really mangle and clog a discourse, by separating it into two or three parts ; which must interrupt the orator's action, and the effect it ought to produce. There remains no true *unity after such divisions ; seeing they make two or three different discourses, which are joined

* A text being opened, then the point upon which the sermon is to run is to be opened ; and it will be the better heard and understood, if there be but one point in a sermon ; so that one head, and only one, is well stated, and fully set out.

Discourse of the pastoral care. p. 249.

into one; only by an arbitrary connexion. For three sermons preached at different times, (if they be formed upon some regular concerted plan, as the sermons in Advent usually are,) make one piece, or entire discourse, as much, as the three points of any of these sermons make one whole by being joined, and delivered, together.

B. What is it then that you mean by order? How confused must a discourse be that is not divided?

A. Do you think there is more confusion in the orations of Demosthenes and Tully, than in the sermons of your parish preacher?

B. I do not know----I believe not.

A. You need not be afraid of giving your judgment too freely. The harangues of these great men are not divided as our sermons are. Nay, Isocrates (of whom we spake so much before,) and other ancient orators, did not follow our method of dividing. The fathers of the church knew nothing of it. Even S. Bernard, the last of them, only gives a hint of some divisions, and does not pursue them; nor divide his discourses in form. And for a long time after him, sermons were not divided: it is a modern invention which we owe originally to the scholastic divines.

B. I grant that the schoolmen are a very bad model for eloquence: but what form did the ancients use to give their discourses?

A. They did not divide them; but they

pointed out carefully all those things that ought to be distinguished : to each of them* they assigned its proper place ; after having attentively considered where it might be introduced to the best advantage, and be fittest to make a due impression. Ofttimes that which would seem nothing to the purpose, by being unseasonably urged, has a very great weight when it is reserved for its proper place ; till the audience be prepared by other things to feel all its force and consequence. Nay, a single word when happily applied, will set the truth in the strongest light. Cicero tells us that we ought sometimes to delay giving a full view of the truth, till the very conclusion. But then, throughout our discourse, there ought to run such a concatenation of proofs, as that the first may make way for the second : and the next always serve to support the former. We ought at first to give a general view of our subject, and endeavour to gain the favour of the audience by a† modest introduction, a respectful ad-

* Ordinis hæc virtus erit, et venus, aut ego fallor,
Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici
Pleraque differat, et præsens in tempus omittat----
Infelix operis summa, quia ponere totum
Nesciet----- HOR. *de A.P.*

† Sed hæc adjuvant in oratore, lenitas vocis, vultus, pudoris significatio, verborum comitas : si quid persequare acrius, ut invitus, et coactus facere videare. Facilitatis, liberalitatis, mansuetudinis, pietatis, grati animi, non appetentis, non avidi signa proferri perutile est---tantum autem efficitur sensu quodam ac ratione dicendi, ut quasi mores oratoris effingat oratio. CICERO *De Orat.*

dress, and the genuine marks of candour and probity. Then we should establish those principles on which we design to argue ; and in a clear, easy, sensible manner propose the principal facts we are to build on ; insisting chiefly on those circumstances, of which we intend to make use afterwards. From these principles and facts we must draw just consequences ; and argue in such a clear and well-connected manner, that all our proofs may support each other : and so be the more remembered. Every step we advance, our discourse ought to grow stronger ; so that the hearers may gradually perceive the force and evidence of the truth : and then we ought to display it in such lively images and movements as are proper to excite the passions. In order to this we must know their various springs, and the mutual dependence they have one upon another ; which of them we can most easily move, and employ to raise the rest ; and which of them in fine, is able to produce the greatest effects ; and must therefore be applied to, in the conclusion of our discourse. It is oftentimes proper, at the close, to make a short recapitulation, in which the orator ought to exert all his force and skill in giving the audience a full, clear, concise view of the chief topics he has enlarged on. In short, one is not obliged always to follow this method without any variation. There are exceptions and allowances, to be made, for different subjects and occasions. And

even in this order I have proposed, one may find an endless variety. But now you may easily see that this method (which is chiefly taken from Tully,) cannot be observed in a discourse that is divided into three parts, nor can it be followed in each particular division. We ought therefore to choose some method, Sir, but such a method as is not discovered, and promised in the beginning of our discourse. Cicero tells us that the best method is generally to conceal the order we follow, till we lead the hearer to it without his being aware of it before. I remember he says, in express terms, that we ought to conceal even the number of our arguments ; so that one shall not be able to count them, though they be very distinct in themselves ; and that we ought not plainly to point out the division of a discourse. But such is the undistinguishing taste of these latter ages, that an audience cannot perceive any order, unless the speaker distinctly explain it in the beginning ; and even intimate to them his gradual advances from the first to the second, and following general heads or subdivisions of his discourse.

C. But do not divisions help to support the attention, and ease the memory of the hearers ? It is for their better instruction that the speaker divides his discourse.

A. A division chiefly relieves the speaker's memory. And even this effect might be much better obtained by his following a natural order without any express division :

for the true connexion of things best directs the mind. Our common divisions are of use to those only who have studied, and been trained up to this method in the schools. And if the common people retain the division better than the rest of the sermon ; it is only because they hear it often repeated : but, generally speaking, they best remember practical points, and such things as strike their senses and imagination.

B. The order you propose may be proper enough for some subjects : but it cannot be fit for all : for, we have not always facts to lay down.

A. When we have none, we must do without them : but there are very few subjects into which they might not be aptly introduced. One of Plato's chief beauties is, that in the beginning of his moral pieces he usually gives us some fragment of history, or some tradition that serves as the foundation of his discourse. This method would far more become those who preach religion ; which is entirely founded upon tradition, history, and the most ancient records. Indeed most preachers argue but weakly ; and do not instruct people sufficiently, because they do not trace back things to these sources.

B. We have already given you too much trouble, Sir, and I am almost ashamed to detain you longer : but I wish heartily you would allow me to ask you a few more

questions concerning the rules of public discourse.

A. With all my heart : I am not yet weary : you may dispose, as you please, of the little time I have left.

B. Well then, you would have all false and trifling ornaments entirely banished from discourse. Now, though you touched upon this point before, pray shew me by some sensible examples how to* distinguish such false beauties from those that are solid and natural.

A. Do you love quavering notes in music? Are you not better pleased with those brisk, significant notes that describe things, and express the passions?

B. Yes, certainly : for, quavers are of no use : they only amuse the ear, and do not affect the mind. Our music was once full of them ; and was therefore very weak and confused : but now we begin to refine our taste, and to come nearer the music of the ancients ; which is a kind of passionate declamation that acts powerfully upon the soul.

A. I knew that music, of which you are

- * False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on every place ;
The face of nature we no more survey,
All glares alike without distinction gay.
But true expression, like the unchanging sun,
Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon,
It gilds all objects but it alters none.
Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable.

ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

so good a judge, would serve to make you understand what concerns eloquence. There ought to be a kind of eloquence in music itself; and in both these arts we ought to reject all false and trilling beauties. Do you not perceive now that by a trilling discourse I mean the humming jingle of languid, uniform periods; a chiming of words that returns perpetually, like the burden of a song? This is the false eloquence that resembles bad music.

B. I wish, Sir, you could make it a little plainer still.

A. The reading of good and bad orators will more effectually form your taste, on this point, than all the rules in the world. However it were easy to satisfy you by some pertinent examples. I will not mention any modern ones; though we abound in false ornaments. That I may not offend any person, let us return to Isocrates who is the standard of those nice and florid harangues that are now in vogue. Did you ever read his famous panegyric on Helen?

B. Yes: I have read it some time ago.

A. How did you like it?

B. Extremely well. I thought I never saw so much wit, elegance, sweetness, invention, and delicacy in any composure. I own to you that Homer himself (whom I read afterwards,) did not seem to have so much spirit as he. But now that you have shown me what ought to be the true aim of

poets and orators, I see plainly that Homer, who concealed his art, vastly surpasses Isocrates who took so much pains to display his skill. But I was once charmed with that orator, and should have been so still, if you had not undeceived me. Mr. ----- is the Isocrates of our days : and I perceive that by shewing the defects of that ancient orator, you condemn all those who imitate his florid, effeminate rhetoric.

A. I am now speaking of Isocrates only—in the beginning of his encomium he magnifies the love that Theseus had for Helen, and fancied that he should give a lofty idea of her, by describing the heroic qualities of that great man who fell in love with her : as if Theseus (whom the ancients always represent as weak and inconstant in his amours,) could not have been smitten with a woman of a moderate beauty. Then he comes to the judgment that Paris formed of her. He says that a dispute having arisen among the goddesses concerning their beauty ; they agreed to make Paris judge of it : upon which occasion Juno proffered him the empire of Asia : Minerva assured him of constant victory in battles : and Venus tempted him with the beautiful Helen. Now seeing Paris, when he was to determine this matter, could not behold the faces of those goddesses, because of their dazzling splendor, he could only judge of the worth of the three things that they offered :—and upon the comparison he

preferred Helen to empire, and to victory. Then the orator praises the judgment of Paris, in whose determination the goddesses themselves acquiesced; and adds these remarkable words: * 'I wonder that any one should think Paris indiscreet in choosing to live with her, for whom many demi-gods would have been willing to die.'

C. This puts me in mind of our preachers who are so full of antitheses and turns of wit. There are a great many such orators as Isocrates.

A. He is their master! all the rest of his panegyric is of the same strain. It is founded on the long war of Troy; the calamities that the Greeks suffered for the rape of Helen, and the praise of beauty which has so much power over men. There is nothing in the whole discourse solidly proved; nor the least point of moral instruction. He judges of the worth of things only according to men's extravagant passions. And as his proofs are weak, so his style is flourished and finical. I

* Θαυμάζω δ' ἃ τις οἶεται κακῶς βεβλεῦσθαι τὸν μετὰ ταύτης ζῆν ἐλόμενον, ἧς ἕνεκα πολλοὶ τῶν ἡμιθέων ἀποθνήσκον ἡθέλησαν.

Isocr. Hel. Laud.

† His very next words are these, — Πῶς δ' ἐκ αὐτῆς ἀνόητος εἰ τὰς θεὰς εὐδῶς περὶ κάλλους φιλονεικῶν, αὐτὸς κάλλος κατεφρόνησε, καὶ μὴ ταύτην ἐνόμισε μεγίστην εἶναι τῶν δωρῶν, περὶ ἧς κακῶς ἑώρα μάλικα σκευδαζέσας; — Ibid.

quoted this passage, profane as it is, because it is a very famous one; and because this affected manner is very much in fashion. The more grave discourses of Isocrates are composed in the same spruce, effeminate way; and are full of such false beauties as that I now mentioned.

C. I find you like none of those witty turns which have nothing in them that is either solid, natural, or affecting; and tend neither to convince, nor paint, nor persuade. The example you have brought from Isocrates, though it be upon a trifling subject, is yet very pertinent: for, all such tinsel-wit must appear still more ridiculous when it is applied to grave and serious matters.

A. But Sir, as to Isocrates, do not you think I had reason to censure him as freely as Tully assures us Aristotle did.

B. What says Tully?

A. That Aristotle* perceiving Isocrates had perverted eloquence from its proper use to amusement and ostentation; and thereby drawn to himself the most considerable disciples, he applied to him a verse of Philoctetes, to shew how much he was ashamed of being silent while that vain declaimer carried all before him. But I have done now; it is time for me to be going.

B. We cannot part with you so soon, Sir: will you then allow of no antitheses?

* Lib. 3. §. 35.

A. Yes : when the things we speak of are naturally opposite one to another, it may be proper enough to shew their opposition. Such antitheses are just, and have a solid beauty, and a right application of them is often the most easy and concise manner of explaining things. But it is extremely childish to use artificial turns and windings to make words clash and play one against another. At first, this may happen to dazzle those who have no taste : but they soon grow weary of such a silly affectation. Did you ever observe the Gothic architecture of our old churches ?

B. Yes ; it is very common.

A. Did you take notice of the roses, holes, unconnected ornaments, and disjointed little knacks that these Gothic buildings are full of. These odd conceits are just such beauties in architecture as forced antitheses and quibbles are in eloquence. The Grecian architecture is far more simple, and admits of none but natural, solid, and majestic ornaments : we see nothing in it but what is great, proportioned, and well placed. But the Gothic kind was invented by the Arabians ; who being a people of a quick, sprightly fancy ; and having no rule, nor culture, could scarce avoid falling into these whimsical niceties. And this vivacity corrupted their taste in all other things. For, they used sophisms in their logic : they loved little knacks in archi-

ecture ; and invented witticisms in poetry and eloquence. All these are of the same kind.

B. This is curious indeed. You think then that a sermon full of forced antitheses, and such kind of ornaments, is like a church built in the Gothic way.

A. Yes : I think the comparison is just.

B. Let me ask you but one question more : and then you shall go.

A. What is it ?

B. It seems very difficult to give a particular account of facts, in a noble style : and yet we ought to do so if we talk solidly as you require. Pray, what is the proper style for expatiating in such cases ?

A. We are so much afraid of a low strain, that our expressions are usually dry, lifeless, and indeterminate. They who praise a saint, pitch on the most magnificent phrases : they tell us he was an admirable person ; that his virtues were celestial ; that he was rather an angel, than a man. And thus the whole encomium is a mere declamation, without any proof ; and without drawing a just character. On the contrary, the ancient Greeks made little use of these general terms which prove nothing : but they insisted much on facts, and the particulars of a character. For instance Xenophon does not once say in all his *Cyropædia*, that Cyrus was an admirable man : but throughout the work he makes us really admire him. Thus is it that we ought to praise holy persons, by entering

into the particular detail of their sentiments and actions. But there prevails an affected politeness among the pedantic and conceited part of all ranks and professions, who value themselves upon their wit or learning. They never venture to use any expression but what they reckon fine and uncommon. They talk always in a † high strain; and would think it beneath them to call things by their proper names. Now in true eloquence almost every thing may be introduced. The perfection of poetry itself, (which is the loftiest kind of composure) depends on a full and lively description of things in all their circumstances. When Virgil represents the Trojan fleet leaving the African shore, or arriving on the coast of Italy, you see every proper circumstance exactly described. But we must own that the Greeks entered still further into the particular detail of things; and followed nature more closely in representing the smallest circumstances. For which reason, many people would be apt (if they dared) to reckon Homer too plain and simple in his narrations. In this ancient, beautiful simplicity, (which few are able to relish,) this poet very much resembles the holy scripture: but in many

* Prima est eloquentiæ virtus perspicuitas; et quo quisque ingenio minus valet, hoc se magis *attollere*, et *dilatare* conatur: ut statura breves indigitos eriguntur; et plura infirmi minantur. Nam tumidos, et corruptos, et *stinnulos*, et quocumque alio cacozeliæ genere peccantes, certum habeo, non virium, sed *infirmiæ* vitio laborare: ut corpora non robore, sed valetudine, infiantur. Quint. lib. ii. c. 3.

places the sacred writings surpass his, as much as he excels all the other ancients, in a natural and lively representation of things.

B. In relating facts then ought we to describe every individual circumstance that belongs to them?

A. No: we should represent nothing to the hearers but what deserves their attention; and helps to give a clear and just idea of the things we describe: so that it requires great judgment to make a right* choice of circumstances. But we must not be afraid of mentioning such as can be any way serviceable: for it is a false politeness that leads us to suppress some useful things, because we do not think them capable of any ornament. Besides, Homer has shown us by his example; that we might give a† proper grace and embellishment to every subject.

B. Seeing you condemn the florid, swelling style; what kind do you reckon fittest for public use?

* See Longinus, §. x.

† First follow nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same:
Unerring nature, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchang'd, and universal light;
Life, force, and beauty must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of art.
Art from that fund each just supply provides,
Works without show; and without pomp presides.
Those rules of old discover'd, not devised,
Are nature still, but nature methodiz'd:
Nature like monarchy, is but restrain'd
By the same laws which first herself ordain'd.

ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

A. There ought to be a variety of style in every discourse. We should rise in our expression when we speak of lofty subjects; and be* familiar, in common ones, without being coarse, or grovelling. In most cases, an easy simplicity and exactness is sufficient: though some things require vehemence, and sublimity. If a painter should draw nothing but magnificent palaces, he could not follow truth; but must paint his own fancies; and by that means soon cloy us. He ought to copy nature in its agreeable varieties: and after drawing a stately city, it might be proper to represent a desert, and the huts of shepherds. Most of those who aim at making fine harangues injudiciously labour to clothe all their thoughts in a † pompous, gaudy dress: and they fancy that they have succeeded happily, when they express some general remarks in a florid, lofty style. Their

* Εἰν ἄρ' ὁ ἰδιωτισμὸς ἐνίοτε τῷ κέσματι παρὰ πολὺ ἐμφανιστικώτερον ἐπιγινώσκειται· γὰρ αὐτόθεν ἐκ τῷ κοινῷ βίβ. τὸ δὲ σύνηδες ἤδη πιστότερον----- ταῦτα γὰρ ἐγγύς παραξύνει τὴν ἰδιώτην, ἀλλ' ἐκ ἰδιωτεύει τῷ σημαντικῷ. Longinus, §. xxxi.

† Namque illud genus ostentationi compositum, solum petit audientiam voluptatem: ideoque omnes dicendi artes aperit, ornatumque orationis exponit---mala affectatio, per omne dicendi genus peccat. Nam et tumida, et exilia, et prædulcia, et abundantia, et arcessita, et exultantia sub idem nomen cadunt. Denique κακόμηλον vocatur, quicquid est ultra virtutem; quoties ingenium iudicio caret, et specie boni fallitur; omnium in eloquentia vitiorum pessimum: nam ostentatum nitentur, hoc petitur. Quint. lib. viii. c. 3.

only care is to fill their discourse with abundance of ornaments, to please the vitiated taste of their audience: like ignorant cooks who know not how to season dishes, in a proper, natural way; but fancy they must give them an exquisite relish by mixing excessive quantities of the most seasoning things. But the style of a true orator has nothing in it that is swelling or ostentatious: he always adapts it to the subjects he treats of, and the persons he instructs: and manages it so judiciously that he never aims at being sublime and lofty; but when he ought to be so.

B. What you said concerning the language of scripture, makes me wish earnestly that you would shew us the beauty of it. May we not see you some time to-morrow?

A. I shall hardly have time to-morrow: but I will endeavour to wait on you this evening. And since you seem so desirous of it, we will talk of the word of God: for hitherto we have only spoken of the language of men.

C. Farewell, Sir, I beg of you to be punctual: otherwise we must come and find you out.

THE THIRD DIALOGUE.

C. I BEGAN to fear, Sir, that you would not come; and was very near going to see for you at Mr. -----.

A. I was detained by a perplexing affair I had upon my hands: but I have got rid of it to my satisfaction.

B. I am very glad of it: for, we wanted you extremely to finish the subject we were talking of in the morning.

C. Since I parted with you, Sir, I heard a sermon at -----, and I thought of you. The preacher spoke in a very edifying manner: but I question whether the common people understood him or not.

A. It happens but too often (as I heard an ingenious lady observe,) that our preachers speak Latin in English. The most essential quality of a good preacher is to be instructive: but he must have great abilities and experience to make him so. On the one hand he must be perfectly acquainted with the force of scripture expressions: on the other, he must understand the capacity of those to whom he preaches; and adapt himself to it. Now this requires a solid knowledge, and great discernment. Preachers speak every day to people of the scripture, the church, the Mosaic law, the gospel; of sacrifices; of Moses and Aaron, and Melchisedec; of the prophets and apostles: but

there is not sufficient care taken to instruct the people in the true meaning of these things, and in the characters of those holy persons. One might follow some preachers twenty years, without getting sufficient knowledge of religion.

B. Do you think that people are really ignorant of those things you mentioned?

C. For my part, I believe they are : and that few or none understand them enough to receive any benefit from sermons.

B. That may be true of the lowest rank of people.

C. Well ; ought not they to be instructed as well as others ? Do not they make up the bulk of mankind ?

A. The truth is, persons of rank and fashion have but little more knowledge of religion than the common people. There are always three fourth parts of an ordinary audience, who do not know those first principles of religion, in which the preacher supposes every one to be fully instructed.

B. Would you then have him explain the catechism in his sermons to a polite congregation ?

A. I grant there is a due regard to be had to an audience ; and discretion to be used in adapting a discourse to their capacity. But still without giving the least offence, a preacher might remind the most discerning hearers of those passages of the sacred history, which explain the origin and institution of holy

things. This way of having recourse to the first foundations of religion, would be so far from seeming low, that it would give most discourses that force and beauty which they generally want. This is particularly true with regard to the mysteries of religion: for the hearers can never be instructed, nor persuaded, if you do not trace things back to their source. For example, how can you make them understand what the church says, after* St. Paul, that Jesus Christ is our Passover, if you do not explain to them the Jewish Passover, which was appointed to be a perpetual memorial of their deliverance from Egypt, and to typify a more important redemption that was reserved for the Messiah. It is for this reason, I said that almost every thing in religion is historical. And if preachers would have a full knowledge of this truth, they must be very conversant in the scripture.

B. You must excuse my interrupting you on this subject; Sir, you told us in the morning that the scriptures are eloquent: and I was glad to hear you say so. Let me intreat you to shew us how we may discern the beauties of scripture; and in what its eloquence consists. The Latin Bible seems to me most vulgar and inaccurate. I see no delicacy in it. What is it then that you so much admire?

* 1 Cor. v. 7.

A. The Latin is only a literal version in which, out of respect to the original, there are many Greek and Hebrew phrases retained. Do you despise Homer because he has been sorrowfully translated into French ?

B. But the Greek itself (which is the original language of the New Testament) appears to me very coarse and unpolite.

A. The apostles were not acquainted with the genuine Greek, but used that corrupted kind which prevailed among the Hellenistical Jews. For this reason St. Paul says* 'I am rude in speech,' but not in knowledge. It is very obvious that the apostle here only meant he was not a master of the Greek tongue ; though he solidly explained the doctrine of the holy scripture.

C. Had not the apostles the gift of speaking unknown tongues ?

A. Undoubtedly : and they even conveyed that gift to great numbers of their illiterate converts. But as for the languages that the apostles had learnt in a natural way, we have reason to believe that the Spirit of God permitted them to speak as they did before. St. Paul who was a citizen of Tarsus, in Cilicia, naturally spake the corrupted Greek used among the Jews there : and we find that this is the language he wrote in. St. Luke seems to have understood Greek a little better.

* 2. Cor. xi. 16.

C. But I always thought that in the passage you mentioned, St. Paul gave up all pretences to oratory : and regarded nothing but the simplicity of the evangelical doctrine. Nay I have heard several persons of worth and good judgment affirm that the holy scripture is not eloquent. St. Jerom was punished for being disgusted at the simplicity of scripture ; and liking Tully better. St. Austin (in his confessions) seems to have fallen into the same fault. Did not God intend to try our faith by the obscurity, and even by the lowness of the scripture-style, as well as by the poverty of our Redeemer ?

A. You seem, Sir, to carry this point too far. Whether do you choose to believe St. Jerom when he was punished for having followed his youthful studies too closely in his retreat ; or when he had made the greatest progress both in sacred and profane learning ; and, in an epistle to Paulinus, invited him to study the scripture ; assuring him that he would find more charms in the prophets than he had discovered in the heathen poets ? Or, was St. Austin's judgment better in his youth, when the seeming meanness of the sacred style disgusted him ; than when he composed his books *Of the Christian Doctrine* ? There he often says that St. Paul was powerfully persuasive ; and that the torrent of his eloquence must be perceived by the most unattentive reader. He adds, that in the apostle, wisdom did not seek after the beauty of

language ; but that the beauties of language offered themselves, and attended his wisdom. He quotes many lofty passages of his epistles ; wherein he shews all the art and address of the heathen orators far outdone. St. Austin excepts only two things in this comparison : he says, that these orators studied the ornaments of eloquence ; but that the beauties of oratory naturally followed St. Paul, and others of the sacred writers. And then he owns that he did not sufficiently understand the delicacies of the Greek tongue, to be a competent judge, whether there be the same numbers and cadence of periods in the sacred text, that we meet with in profane authors. I forgot to tell you that he quotes that passage of the prophet Amos which begins thus * ‘wo to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria----- :’ and assures us that in this place the prophet has surpassed every thing that is sublime in the heathen orators.

C. But how do you understand these words of St. Paul ;† ‘my speech and my preaching was not with the enticing (persuasive) words of man’s wisdom----?’ Does he not tell the Corinthians that he came not to preach Christ to them, with the sublimity of discourse and of wisdom : that he ‘knew nothing among them but Jesus, and him crucified :’ that his preaching was founded

* Ch. vi.

† 1 Cor. xi, 4.

not upon the persuasive language of human wisdom and learning, but upon the sensible effects of the Spirit and the power of God ; to the end (as he adds) ‘ that their faith should not depend upon the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.’ What is the meaning of these words, Sir ? What stronger expressions could the apostle use to condemn this art of persuasion that you would establish ? For my part, I freely own that at first I was glad when you censured all those affected ornaments of discourse that vain declaimers are so fond of : but the sequel of your scheme does not answer the pious beginning of it. I find that you would still make preaching a human art ; and banish apostolical simplicity from the pulpit.

A. Though you judge very unfavourably of my esteem for eloquence ; I am not dissatisfied at the zeal with which you censure it. However, Sir, let us endeavour to understand one another aright. There are several worthy persons who judge, with you, that eloquent preaching is repugnant to the simplicity of the gospel. But when we have mutually explained our sentiments, perhaps they may be found to agree. What then do you mean by simplicity ? And what do you call eloquence ?

C. By simplicity, I mean a discourse without any artifice or magnificence. By eloquence, I mean a discourse full of art and ornaments.

A. When you require an artless, simple discourse, would you have it without order, and connexion: without solid and convincing proofs; and without a proper method for instructing the ignorant? Would you have a preacher say nothing that is pathetic; and never endeavour to affect the heart?

C. Far from it: I would have a discourse that both instructs and moves people.

A. That would make it eloquent: for we have seen before that eloquence is the art of instructing and persuading men, by moving their passions.

C. I grant that preachers ought to convince and affect their hearers: but I would have them to do it without art, by an apostolical simplicity.

A. The more artless and natural such a convincing, persuasive eloquence is, it must be the more powerful. But let us inquire whether the art of persuasion be inconsistent with the simplicity of the gospel. What mean you by art?

C. I mean a system of rules that men have invented, and usually observe in their discourses, to make them more beautiful, elegant, and pleasing.

A. If by art you only mean this invention to render a discourse more handsome and polished in order to please people; I will not dispute with you about words; but will readily acknowledge that this art ought not to be admitted into sermons: for, (as we agreed

before) this vanity is unworthy of eloquence, and far more unbecoming the sacred function. This is the very point about which I reasoned so much with Mr. B. But if by art and eloquence, you mean what the most judicious writers among the ancients understood ; we must then set a just value upon eloquence.

C. What did they understand by it ?

A. According to them the art of eloquence comprehends those means that wise reflection and experience have discovered to render a discourse proper to persuade men of the truth ; and to engage them to love and obey it. And this is what you think every preacher should be able to do. For did you not say that you approved of order, and a right manner of instruction ; solidity of reasoning, and pathetic movements ; I mean such as can touch and affect people's hearts ? Now this is what I call eloquence : you may give it what name you please.

C. Now I comprehend your notion of eloquence : and I cannot but acknowledge that such a manly, grave, serious, manner of persuasion would much become the pulpit ; and that it seems even necessary to instruct people with success. But how do you understand those words of St. Paul that I quoted before ? Do they not expressly condemn eloquence ?

A. In order to explain the apostle's words, let me ask you a few questions.

C. As many as you please, Sir.

A. Is it not true that the apostle argues with wonderful strength in his epistles? Does he not reason finely against the heathen philosophers, and the Jews, in his epistle to the Romans? Is there not great force, in what he says concerning the inability of the Mosaic law to justify men?

C. Certainly.

A. Is there not a chain of solid reasoning in his epistle to the Hebrews, about the insufficiency of the ancient sacrifices; the rest that David promised to the children of God, besides that which the Israelites enjoyed in Palestine after Joshua's days; concerning the order of Aaron, and that of Melchisedec; and the spiritual and eternal covenant that behoved to succeed the carnal and earthly one which was established by the mediation of Moses, for a time only? Are not the apostle's arguments on these several subjects very strong and conclusive?

C. I think they are.

A. When St. Paul therefore disclaimed the use of 'the persuasive words of man's wisdom,' he did not mean to condemn true wisdom, and the force of reasoning.

C. That appears plainly from his own example.

A. Why then do you think that he meant to condemn solid eloquence, any more than true wisdom?

C. Because he expressly rejects eloquence in that passage which I desired you to explain.

A. But doth he not likewise disclaim wisdom? The place seems to be more express against wisdom, and human reasoning, than against eloquence. And yet he himself reasoned frequently; and was very eloquent. You grant that he argued well: and St. Austin assures you that the apostle was an orator.

C. You plainly point out the difficulty; but you do not answer it. Pray, shew us how it is to be solved.

A. St. Paul reasoned much; he persuaded effectually: so that he was really an excellent philosopher and an orator. But as he tells us in the place you quoted; his preaching was not founded on human reasoning, nor on the art of persuasion. It was a ministry of divine institution, that owed its efficacy to God alone. The conversion of the whole world was, according to the ancient prophecies, to be the great and standing miracle of the Christian religion. This was the kingdom of God that came from heaven; and was to convert and reduce all the nations of the earth to the worship and service of the true God. Jesus Christ crucified, by his being declared to them was to draw them all to himself merely by the power of his cross. The philosophers had reasoned and disputed, without converting either themselves, or others. The Jews had been intrusted with a law that shewed them their miseries, but could not relieve them. All mankind were convinced of the general disorder and corrup-

tion that reigned among them. Jesus Christ came with his cross ; that is, he came poor, humble, and suffering for us. To silence our vain, presumptuous reason, he did not argue like the philosophers ; but he determined with authority. By his miracles, and his grace, he shewed that he was above all. That he might confound the false wisdom of men, he sets before them the seeming folly and scandal of his cross ; that is, the example of his profound humiliation. That which mankind reckoned* folly, and at which they were most offended, was the very thing that should convert and lead them to God. They wanted to be cured of their pride, and their excessive love of sensible objects : and to affect them the more, God shewed them his Son crucified. The apostles preached him ; and walked in his steps. They had not recourse to any human means, neither to philosophy, nor rhetoric, nor policy, nor wealth, nor authority. God would have the sole glory of his work : and the success of it to depend entirely on himself : he therefore chose what is weak ; and rejected what is strong ; to display his power in the most sensible manner. He brought all out of nothing in the conversion of the world, as well as at the creation of it. That work therefore had this divine character stamped upon it, that it was not founded upon any thing that the world admired, or

* 1 Cor. i. 23. 25.

valued. It would only have weakened and frustrated the wonderful power of the cross (as* St. Paul says) to ground the preaching of the gospel upon natural means. It was necessary that without human help, the gospel should of itself open people's hearts; and by that prodigious efficacy shew mankind that it came from God. Thus was human wisdom confounded, and rejected. Now what must we conclude from hence? This only; that the conversion of the nations, and the establishment of the Christian church, was not owing to the learned reasonings, and persuasive words of man's wisdom. It does not imply that there was no eloquence, nor wisdom in several of those who first preached the gospel: but only, that they did not depend on this eloquent wisdom; nor did they study it as a thing that was to give an efficacy to their doctrine. It was founded (as the apostle tells us†) not upon the persuasive discourses of human philosophy; but solely upon the effects of the Spirit, and the power of God; that is, upon the miracles that struck the eyes and minds of men, and upon the inward operation of the divine grace.

C. According to your reasoning then, they make void the efficacy of our Savior's cross, who ground their preaching upon human wisdom and eloquence.

* 1 Cor. i. 17.

† Οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις——

1 Cor. ii. 4.

A. Undoubtedly. The ministry of the word is entirely built upon faith: and the preachers of it ought to pray, and purify their hearts; and expect all their success from heaven. They should arm themselves with 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;' and not depend on their own abilities. This is the necessary preparation for preaching the gospel. But though the inward fruit and success of it must be ascribed to grace alone, and the efficacy of God's word; there are yet some things that man is to do on his part.

C. Hitherto you have talked very solidly: but I see plainly you are now returning to your first opinion.

A. I did not change it. Do not you believe that the work of our salvation depends upon God's grace?

C. Yes: it is an article of faith.

A. You own however that we ought to use great prudence in choosing a right station and conduct in life; and in avoiding dangerous temptations. Now do we make void the grace of God, and its efficacy, by watching, and prayer, and a prudent circumspection? Certainly not. We owe all to God: and yet he obliges us to comply with an external order of human means. The apostles did not study the vain pomp, and trifling ornaments of the heathen orators. They did not fall into the subtil reasonings of the philosophers,

who made all to depend upon those airy speculations in which they lost themselves. The apostles only preached Jesus Christ with all the force, and magnificent simplicity of the scripture language. It is true they had no need of any preparation for their ministry; because the Spirit, who descended upon them in a sensible manner, supplied them with words in preaching the gospel. The difference then betwixt the apostles, and their successors in the ministry, is, that these, not being miraculously inspired like the apostles, have need to prepare themselves, and to fill their minds with the doctrine and spirit of the scripture, to form their discourses. But this preparation should never lead them to preach in a more artless manner than the apostles. Would you not be satisfied if preachers used no more ornaments in their sermons than St. Peter, St. Paul, St. James, St. Jude, and St. John did?

C. I think I ought to require no more. And I must confess that since (as you say) eloquence consists chiefly in the order, force, and propriety of the words by which men are persuaded and moved; it does not give me so much offence as it did. I always reckoned eloquence to be an art that is inconsistent with the simplicity of the gospel.

A. There are two sorts of people that have this notion of it; the false orators, who are widely mistaken in seeking after eloquence amidst a vain pomp of words; and some pi-

ous persons who have no great depth of knowledge : but though out of humility they avoid that false rhetoric which consists in a gaudy, ostentatious style ; they yet aim at true eloquence, by striving to persuade, and move their hearers.

C. I now understand your notions exactly well : let us now return to the eloquence of the scripture.

A. In order to perceive it, nothing is more useful than to have a just taste of the ancient simplicity : and this may best be obtained by reading the most* ancient Greek authors. I say the most ancient ; for those Greeks whom the Romans so justly despised, and called Græculi, were then entirely degenerate. As I told you before, you ought to be perfectly acquainted with Homer, Plato, Xenophon, and the other earliest writers. After that, you will be no more surprised at the plainness of the scripture style : for in them you will find almost the same kind of customs, the same artless narrations, the same images of great things, and the same movements. The difference betwixt them

* Ενδέκνυται δ' ἡμῖν ἔτος ὁ ἀνὴρ (ΠΛΑΤΩΝ)
 ἃ βελο ἱμεῖθα μὴ κατολιγωρῆσαι, ὥς καὶ ἄλλη τις
 παρὰ τὰ ἐρημένα ὁδὸς ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ τένα. ποία
 δὲ καὶ τίς αὕτη ; ἢ τῶν ἔμπροσθεν μεγάλων
 συγγραφέων καὶ ποιητῶν μίμησις τε καὶ ζήλωσις.
 καὶ τέτε γε, Φίλτατε, ἀπρὶς ἐχωμέθα τῷ σκοπῷ.

LONGINUS, § xiii.

upon comparison is much to the honour of the scripture. It surpasses them vastly in native simplicity, liveliness, and grandeur. Homer himself never reached the sublimity of Moses' songs; especially the last, which all the Israelitish children were to learn by heart. Never did any ode, either Greek, or Latin, come up to the loftiness of the Psalms: particularly that which begins thus; * 'The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken,' surpasses the utmost stretch of human invention. Neither Homer nor any other poet ever equalled† Isaiah describing the majesty of God, in whose sight the 'nations of the earth are as the small dust; yea, less than nothing and vanity;' seeing it is 'He that stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.' Sometimes this prophet has all the sweetness of an eclogue, in the smiling images he gives us of peace: and sometimes he soars so high as to leave every thing below him. What is there in antiquity that can be compared to the Lamentations of Jeremiah when he tenderly deplores the miseries of his country? or to the prophecy of Nahum when he foresees in spirit the proud Nineveh fall under the rage of an invincible army. We fancy that we see the army, and hear the noise of arms and chariots. Every thing is painted in such a lively manner as strikes the imagination.

* Psal. l. 1—6.

† Isa. xl. 9—28.

The prophet far outdoes Homer. Read likewise Daniel denouncing to Belshazzar the divine vengeance ready to overwhelm him: and try if you can find any thing in the most sublime originals of antiquity that can be compared to those passages of sacred writ. As for the rest of scripture, every portion of it is uniform and consistent; every part bears the peculiar character that becomes it; the history, the particular detail of laws, the descriptions, the vehement and pathetic passages, the mysteries, and prophecies, and moral discourses; in all these there appears a natural and beautiful variety. In short, there is as great a difference betwixt the heathen poets, and the prophets; as there is betwixt a false enthusiasm, and the true. The sacred writers, being truly inspired, do in a sensible manner express something divine: while the others, striving to soar above themselves, always shew human weakness in their loftiest flights. The second book of Maccabees, the book of Wisdom, especially at the end; and Ecclesiasticus in the beginning, discover the gaudy, swelling style that the degenerate Greeks had spread over the east; where their language was established with their dominion. But it would be in vain to enlarge upon all these particulars: it is by reading that you must discover the truth of them.

B. I long to set about it: we ought to apply ourselves to this kind of study, more than we do.

* 13.

C. I easily conceive that the Old Testament is written with that magnificence ; and those lively images you speak of. But you say nothing of the simplicity of Christ's words.

A. That simplicity of style is entirely according to the ancient taste. It is agreeable both to Moses and the prophets, whose expressions Christ often uses. But though his language be plain and familiar, it is however figurative and sublime in many places. I could easily shew by particular instances, (if we had the books here to consult,) that we have not a preacher of this age who is so figurative in his most studied sermons, as Jesus Christ was in his most popular discourses. I do not mean those that St. John relates, where almost every thing is sensibly divine : I speak of his most familiar discourses recorded by the other evangelists. The apostles wrote in the same manner ; with this difference ; that Jesus Christ being master of his doctrine, delivers it calmly. He says just what he pleases ; and speaks, with the utmost easiness, of the heavenly kingdom and glory, as of his* father's house. All those exalted things that astonish us, were natural and familiar to him : he is born there ; and only tells us what he† saw ; as he himself declares. On the contrary the apostles‡ sunk under the weight of the truths that were revealed to them : they

* John xiv. 2. † Ch. viii. 38. ‡ 2 Cor. xii. 2. 4. 7.

want words, and are not able to express their ideas. Hence flow those digressions and obscure passages in St. Paul's writings, and those transpositions of his thoughts, which shew his mind was transported with the abundance and greatness of the truths that offered themselves to his attention. All this irregularity of style shews that the Spirit of God forcibly guided the minds of the apostles. But notwithstanding these little disorders of their style, every thing in it is noble, lively, and moving. As for St. John's Revelation, we find in it the same grandeur and enthusiasm that there is in the prophets. The expressions are oftentimes the same: and sometimes this resemblance of style gives a mutual light to them both. You see therefore that the eloquence of scripture is not confined to the books of the Old Testament; but is likewise to be found in the New.

C. Supposing the scripture to be eloquent, what will you conclude from it?

A. That those who preach it, may, without scruple, imitate, or rather, borrow, its eloquence.

C. We find that preachers do choose those passages they think most beautiful.

A. But it mangles the scripture thus to shew it to christians only in separate passages. And however great the beauty of such passages may be, it can never be fully perceived unless one knows the connexion of them: for, every thing in scripture is connected:

and this coherence is the most great and wonderful thing to be seen in the sacred writings. For want of a due knowledge of it, preachers mistake those beautiful passages; and put upon them what sense they please. They content themselves with some ingenious interpretations; which, being arbitrary, have no force to persuade men, and to reform their manners.

B. What would you have preachers to do? Must they use only the language of scripture?

A. I would have them at least not think it enough to join together a few passages of scripture that have no real connexion. I would have them explain the principles, and the series of the scripture doctrine; and take the spirit, the style, and the figures of it; that all their discourses may serve to give people a right understanding, and true relish of God's word. There needs no more to make preachers eloquent: for by doing this, they would imitate the best model of ancient eloquence.

B. But in this case we behaved (as I said before) to explain the several parts of scripture as they lie.

A. I would not confine all preachers to this. One might make sermons upon the scripture without explaining the several parts of it as they lie. But it must be owned, that preaching would be quite another thing, if, according to ancient custom, the sacred

books were thus explained to the people in a connected, judicious manner. Consider what authority a man must have who should say nothing from his own invention; but only follow and explain the thoughts and words of God. Besides he would do two things at once. By unfolding the truths of scripture, he would explain the text; and accustom the people to join always the sense and the letter together. What advantage must they not reap if they were used to nourish themselves with this spiritual bread? An audience who had heard the chief points of the Mosaic law explained, would be able to receive far more benefit from an explication of the truths of the gospel, than the greatest part of christians are now. The preacher we spoke of before, has this failing among many great qualities, that his sermons are trains of fine reasoning about religion; but they are not religion itself. We apply ourselves too much to drawing of moral characters, and inveighing against the general disorders of mankind; and we do not sufficiently explain the principles and precepts of the gospel.

C. Preachers choose this way because it is far easier to declaim against the follies and disorders of mankind, than to explain the fundamental truths and duties of religion judiciously. To be able to describe the corruptions of the age, they need only have some knowledge of men and things; and proper words to paint them. But to set the great

duties of the gospel in a just light, requires an attentive meditation and study of the holy scriptures. There are but few preachers who have such a solid, comprehensive knowledge of religion as can enable them to explain it clearly to others. Nay, there are some who make pretty discourses; and yet could not catechise the people, and far less make a good homily.

A. Very true; it is here that our preachers are most defective. Most of their fine sermons contain only philosophical reasonings. Sometimes they preposterously quote scripture only for the sake of decency or ornament: and it is not then regarded as the word of God; but as the invention of men.

C. You will grant, I hope, that the labours of such men tend to make void the cross of Christ.

A. I give them up; and contend only for the eloquence of scripture which evangelical preachers ought to imitate. So that we are agreed on this point: provided you will not excuse some zealous preachers, who, under pretence of apostolical simplicity, do not effectually study either the doctrine of scripture, or the powerful manner of persuasion that we are taught there. They imagine that they need only bawl, and speak often of hell and the devil. Now without doubt a preacher ought to affect people by strong, and sometimes even by terrible images: but it is from the scripture that he should learn to make

powerful impressions. There he may clearly discover the way to make sermons plain and popular, without losing the force and dignity they ought always to have. For want of this knowledge a preacher oftentimes doth but stun and frighten people : so that they remember but few clear notions : and even the impressions of terror they received, are not lasting. This mistaken simplicity that some affect, is too often a cloak for ignorance : and at best it is such an unedifying manner of address, as cannot be acceptable either to God or men. Nothing can excuse such homely preachers, but the sincerity of their intentions. They ought to have studied and meditated much upon the word of God, before they undertook to preach. A priest who understands the scripture fully, and has the gift of speaking, supported by the authority of his function, and of a good life, might make excellent discourses without great preparation. For one speaks easily of such truths as make a clear and strong impression on his mind. Now above all things, such a subject as religion must furnish exalted thoughts ; and excite the noblest sentiments : and this is the design of eloquence. But a preacher ought to speak to his audience as a father would talk to his children, with an affectionate tenderness : and not like a declaimer, pronouncing an harangue with stiffness, and an affected delicacy. It were to be wished indeed that, generally speaking, none were

allowed to feed the christian flocks but their respective shepherds, who ought best to know their wants. In order to this, none should be chosen for pastors, but such as have the gift of preaching. The neglect of this occasions two evils : one is, that dumb pastors, and such as speak without abilities are little esteemed. Another evil is, that the function of voluntary preachers allures many vain, ambitious spirits, that endeavour to distinguish themselves this way. You know that in former ages the ministry of the word was reserved for the bishops ; especially in the western church. You must have heard of St. Austin's case ; that, contrary to the established rule, he was obliged to preach while he was only a presbyter ; because that Valerius his bishop and predecessor, was a stranger who could not talk easily : this was the beginning of that custom in the western parts. In the east, priests sooner began to preach ; as appears from St. Chrysostom's sermons, which he made at Antioch, when he was only a presbyter.

C. I grant that generally speaking the office of preaching should be reserved for the parochial clergy. This would be the way to restore to the pulpit that simplicity and dignity that ought to adorn it. For if pastors joined the knowledge of the scriptures to their experience in the ministerial function, and the conduct of souls ; they would speak in such a way as is best adapted to the wants

of their flocks. Whereas those preachers who give up themselves chiefly to study and speculation, are less able to obviate people's prejudices and mistakes : they do not suit their discourses to vulgar capacities : and insist chiefly on such general points as do not instruct nor affect men : to say nothing of the weight and influence that the shepherd's own voice must have among his flock, above a stranger's. These, methinks, are convincing reasons for preferring a pastor's sermons before other people's. Of what use are so many young preachers, without experience, without knowledge, and without piety ? It were better to have fewer sermons, and more judicious ones.

B. But there are many priests who are not pastors, and who preach with great success. How many persons are there of the religious orders, who fill the pulpit to advantage ?

C. I own there are many : and such men ought to be made pastors of parishes ; and even be constrained to undertake the care of souls. Were not anchorets of old forced from their beloved solitude, and raised to public stations, that the light of their piety might shine in the church and edify the faithful ?

A. But it does not belong to us to regulate the discipline of the church. Every age has its proper customs, as the circumstances of things require. Let us shew a regard to whatever the church tolerates : and, without

indulging a censorious humour, let us finish our character of a worthy preacher.

C. What you have said already gives me, I think, an exact idea of it.

A. Let us hear then what you reckon necessary to make a complete preacher.

C. I think that he ought to have studied solidly, during his younger days, whatever is most useful in the poetry and eloquence of the ancients.*

A. That is not necessary. It is true when one has finished such studies successfully, they may be of use to him, even towards a right understanding of the scriptures: as St. Paul has shewn in a treatise he composed on this very subject. But after all, this sort of study is rather useful than necessary. In the first ages of the church, the clergy found a want of this kind of learning. Those indeed who had applied themselves to it, in their youth, turned it to the service of religion, when they became pastors: but such as had neglected these studies before, were not permitted to follow them, when they had once engaged themselves in the study of the sacred writings; which were then reckoned to be

* The *Greek* and *Roman* authors have a spirit in them, a force, both of thought and expression, that latter ages have not been able to imitate; *Buchanan* only excepted; in whom, more particularly in his *Psalm*, there is a beauty, and life, an exactness as well as a liberty, that cannot be imitated, and scarce enough commended.

Discourse of the pastoral care, Ch. viii.

sufficient. Hence came that passage in the* apostolical constitutions, which exhorts Christians not to read the heathen authors. 'If you want history (says the book,) or laws, or moral precepts, or eloquence, or poetry, you will find them all in the scriptures.' In effect we have already seen that it is needless to seek elsewhere, for any thing that is necessary to form our taste and judgment of true eloquence. St. Austin says that the smaller stock we have of other learning, we ought so much the more to enrich ourselves out of that sacred treasure: and that seeing our notions are too scanty to express divine things in a proper way, we have need to exalt and improve our knowledge, by the authority of Scripture; and our language, by the dignity of its expressions. But I ask your pardon for interrupting you. Go on, Sir, if you please.

C. Well then; let us be content with the sufficiency of Scripture. But shall we not add the fathers?

A. Without doubt: they are the channels of tradition. It is by their writings that we learn the manner in which the church interpreted the Scripture in all ages.

C. But are preachers obliged to explain every passage of Scripture according to the interpretations that the fathers have given us. We find that one father gives a spiritual or

* B. i. c. 6.

mystical sense ; and another gives a literal one. Now which must we choose ? for there would be no end of mentioning them all.

A. When I affirm that we ought to interpret the Scripture according to the doctrine of the fathers ; I mean, their constant and uniform doctrine. They frequently gave pious interpretations that differed very much from the literal sense ; and were not founded on the propheticall allusions, and the mysterious doctrines of religion. Now seeing these interpretations are arbitrary, we are not obliged to follow them ; ‘seeing they did not follow one another.’ But in those places where they explain the sentiments of the church concerning points of faith or practice ; it is not allowable to explain the Scripture in a sense contrary to the doctrine of the fathers. This is the authority that we ought to ascribe to them.

C. This seems clear enough. I would therefore have a clergyman (before he begin to preach) be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine of the fathers, that he may follow it. I would even have him study the principles they laid down for their conduct ; their rules of moderation ; and their method of instruction.

A. Right ; they are our masters. They had an exalted genius : they had great and pious souls, full of heroical sentiments. They had a singular knowledge of the tempers and manners of men : and acquired a great repute ; and a

very easy way of preaching. We even find that many of them were very polite, and knew whatever is decent, either in writing or speaking in public; and what is handsome both in familiar conversation, and in discharging the common duties of life. Doubtless all this must have conduced to render them eloquent; and fit to gain upon people's minds. Accordingly we find in their writings a politeness not only of language, but of sentiments and manners; which is not to be seen in the writers of the following ages. This just taste and discernment, (which agrees perfectly well with simplicity, and rendered their persons acceptable, and their behaviour engaging) was highly serviceable to religion. And in this point we can scarce imitate them enough. So that after the Scriptures, the knowledge of the fathers will help a preacher to compose good sermons.

C. When one has laid such a solid foundation, and edified the church by his exemplary virtues; he would then be fit to explain the gospel with great authority, and good effect. For by familiar instructions, and useful conferences, (to which we suppose him to have been accustomed betimes,) he must have attained a sufficient freedom and easiness of speaking. Now if such pastors applied themselves to all the particular duties of their function, as administering the sacraments; directing pious souls; and comforting afflicted, or dying, persons; it is certain they could not

have much time to make elaborate sermons, and learn them word for word. ‘*The mouth behoved to speak from the abundance of the heart;’ and communicate to the people the fulness of gospel-knowledge, and the affecting sentiments of the preacher. As for what you said yesterday, about getting sermons by heart I had the curiosity to seek out a passage in St. Austin that I had read before: it is to this purpose: ‘He thinks that a preacher ought to speak in a more plain and sensible manner than other people: for, seeing custom and decency will not permit his hearers to ask him any questions; he should be afraid of not adapting his discourse to their capacity. Wherefore, says he, they who get their sermons by heart, word for word, and so cannot repeat and explain a truth till they see that their hearers understand it, must lose one great end and benefit of preaching.’ You see by this, Sir, that St. Austin only prepared his subject, without burdening his memory with all the words of his sermons. Though the precepts of true eloquence should require more; yet the rules of the gospel-ministry will not permit us to go farther. As for my own part, I have been long of your opinion concerning this matter; because of the many pressing necessities in the Christian church, that require a pastor’s continual application. While a priest, who ought to be † ‘a man of God, thoroughly furnished unto

* Matt. xii. 34.

† 2 Tim. iii. 17.

all good works,' should be diligent in rooting out ignorance and offences from the field of the church; I think it unworthy of him to waste his time in his closet, in smoothing of periods; giving delicate touches to his descriptions; and inventing quaint divisions. When one falls into the method and employment of these pretty preachers, he can have no time to do any thing else; he applies himself to no other business, or useful kind of study: nay to refresh himself, he is oftentimes forced to preach the same sermons over and over again. But what kind of eloquence can a preacher attend to, when his hearers know beforehand all the expressions, and pathetic figures he will use. This is a likely way indeed to surprise and astonish; to soften, and move, and persuade them. This must be a strange manner of concealing one's art; and of letting nature speak. To tell you freely, Sir, this gives me great offence. What! shall a dispenser of the divine mysteries be an idle declaimer, jealous of his reputation, and fond of * vain pomp? Shall he not dare to

* Sed his ornatus (repetam enim) virilis, fortis et sanctus sit—non debet quisquam ubi *maxima rerum momenta* versantur, de verbis esse sollicitus—prima virtus est vitio carere. Igitur ante omnia, ne speremus ornatum orationem fore, quæ probabilis non erit. *Probabile* autem, Cicero id genus dicit, quod non plus, minusve est quam decet. Non quia comi expoliri non debeat; nam et hæc ornatus pars est: sed quia vitium est, ubique quod nimium est. Itaque vult esse auctoritatem et pondus in verbis: sententias vel graves, vel aptas opinionibus hominum ac moribus.

Quintil. lib. viii. c. 3.

speaking of God to his people, without having ranged all his words, and learned his lesson by heart like a school boy ?

A. I am very much pleased with your zeal. What you say is true. But we must not however inveigh against this abuse with too much violence : for we ought to shew a regard to persons of worth and piety, who, out of deference to custom, or being prepossessed by example, have, with a good design, fallen into the method that you justly censure. But I am ashamed to interrupt you so often. Go on, I beseech you.

C. I would have a preacher explain the whole plan of religion ; and unfold every part of it, in the most intelligible manner ; by shewing the primitive institution of things ; and pointing out the sequel and tradition of them : that by shewing the origin and establishment of religion, he might destroy the objections of unbelievers, without offering to attack them openly ; lest he should thereby lay a stumbling block in the way of illiterate, well meaning Christians.

A. That is very right. The best way of proving the truth of religion, is to explain it justly ; for it carries its own evidence along with it, when we represent it in its native purity. All other proofs that are not drawn from the very foundation of religion itself, and the manner of its propagation, are but foreign to it. Thus, for instance, the best proof of the creation of the world, of the deluge, and the

miracles of Moses, may be drawn from the nature of those miracles ; and the artless, impartial manner in which the Mosiac history is written. A wise, unprejudiced person needs only to read it, to be fully convinced of its truth.

C. I would likewise have a preacher assiduously explain to the people in a connected train not only all the particular precepts and mysteries of the gospel ; but likewise the origin and institution of the sacraments ; the traditions, discipline, the liturgy, and ceremonies of the church. By these instructions he would guard the faithful against the objections of heretics ; and enable them to give an account of their faith : and even to affect such heretics as are not obstinate : he would strengthen people's faith, give them an exalted notion of religion ; and make them receive some edification and benefit from what they see in the church. Whereas with the superficial instruction that is generally given them at present, they comprehend little or nothing of what they see ; and have but a very confused idea of what they hear from the preacher. It is chiefly for the sake of this connected scheme of instruction that I would have fixed persons, such as pastors, to preach in every parish. I have often observed that there is no art, nor science, that is not taught coherently by principles and method, in a connected train of instructions. Religion is the only thing that is not taught thus to Chris-

tians. In their childhood they have a little, dry catechism put into their hands, which they learn by rote, without understanding the sense of it. And after that, they have no other instruction but what they can gather from sermons upon unconnected general subjects. I would therefore, (as you said) have preachers teach people the first principles of their religion ; and, by a due method, lead them on to the highest mysteries of it.

A. That was the ancient way. They began with catechizing : after which, pastors taught their people the several doctrines of the gospel, in a connected train of homilies. This instructed Christians fully in the word of God : you know St. Austin's book, of ' catechizing the ignorant ;' and St. Clement's tract, which he composed to shew the heathen whom he converted what were the doctrines and manners of the Christian philosophy. In those days the greatest men were employed in these catechetical instructions ; and accordingly they produced such wonderful effects, as seem quite incredible to us.

C. In fine, I would have every preacher make such sermons as should not be too troublesome to him ; that so he might be able to preach often. They ought therefore to be short ; that without fatiguing himself or wearying the people he might preach every Sunday, after the gospel. As far as we can judge, those aged bishops who lived in former times and had constant labours to em-

ploy them, did not make such a stir as our modern preachers do in talking to the people in the midst of divine service ; which the bishops themselves read* solemnly every Lord's day. A preacher now-a-days gets little credit unless he comes out of the pulpit sweating and breathless ; and unable to do any thing the rest of the day. The bishop's upper vestment (which was not then opened at the shoulders as it is now, but hung equally down on all sides,) probably hindered him from moving his arms, as some preachers do. So that as their sermons were short, so their action must have been grave and moderate. Now, Sir, is not all this agreeable to your principles ? is not this the idea you gave us of good preaching ?

A. It is not mine : it is the current notion of all antiquity. The farther I inquire into this matter, the more I am convinced

* A clergyman must bring his mind to an inward and feeling sense of those things that are *prayed* for in our *offices* : this will make him pronounce them with an equal measure of gravity and affection ; and with a due slowness, and emphasis. I do not love the theatrical way of the church of *Rome*, in which it is a great study, and a long practice, to learn in every one of their offices, how they ought to compose their looks, gesture, and voice : yet a light wandering of the eyes, and a hasty running through the *prayers*, are things highly unbecoming : they very much lessen the majesty of our worship ; and give our enemies advantage to call it *dead* and *formal* ; when they see plainly that he who officiates, is dead and formal in it. A deep sense of the things prayed for, a true recollection and attention of spirit, and a holy earnestness of soul, will give a composure to the look, and a weight to the pronounciation, that will be tempered between affectation on the one hand, and levity on the other.

Discourse of the pastoral care. ch. viii.

that the ancient form of sermons was the most perfect. The primitive pastors were great men : they were not only very holy, but they had a complete, clear knowledge of religion, and of the best way to persuade men of its truth : and they took care to regulate all the circumstances of it. There is a great deal of wisdom, hidden under this air of simplicity : and we ought not to believe that a better method could have been afterwards found out. You have set this whole matter in the best light, and have left me nothing to add : indeed you have explained my thoughts better than I should have done myself.

B. You magnify the eloquence, and the sermons of the fathers mightily.

A. I do not think that I commend them too much.

B. I am surprised to see, that after you have been so severe against those orators who mix turns of wit with their discourses, you should be so indulgent to the fathers, whose writings are full of jingling antitheses, and quibbles, intirely contrary to all your rules. I wish you would be consistent with yourself. Pray, Sir, unfold all this to us. Particularly, what do you think of Tertullian ?

A. There are many excellent things in him. The loftiness of his sentiments is oft-times admirable. Besides he should be read for the sake of some principles concerning tradition ; some historical facts ; and the discipline of his time. But as for his style, I do

not pretend to justify it. He has many false and obscure notions ; many harsh and perplexed metaphors : and the generality of readers are most fond of his faults. He has * spoiled many preachers. For, the desire of saying something that is singular leads them to study his works : and his uncommon pompous style dazzles them. We must therefore beware of imitating his thoughts or ex-

* One of the greatest and most remarkable proofs of the strong influence that some imaginations have over others, is the power that some others have to persuade, without any proof. For example, the turn of words that we find in *Tertullian*, *Seneca*, *Montaigne*, and some other authors, has so many charms, and so much lustre, that they dazzle most readers—their words, however insignificant, have more force than the reasons of other people—I protest I have a great value for some of *Tertullian's* works ; and chiefly for his *Apology* against the *Gentiles* ; his book of *prescriptions* against heretics ; and for some passages of *Seneca* ; though I have very little esteem for *Montaigne*. *Tertullian* was indeed a man of great learning : but he had more memory than judgment—the regard he shewed to the visions of *Montanus*, and his prophetesses, is an unquestionable proof of his weak judgment. The disorder of his imagination sensibly appears in the heat, the transports, and enthusiastic flights he falls into, upon trifling subjects,—what could he infer from his pompous descriptions of the changes that happen in the world ? Or how could they justify his laying aside his usual dress, to wear the philosophical cloak ? The moon has different *phases* : the year has several seasons : the fields change their appearance in summer and winter : whole provinces are drowned by inundations, or swallowed up by earthquakes—in fine, all nature is subject to changes : therefore he had reason to wear the cloak rather than the common robe !—nothing can excuse the silly arguments and wild fancies of this author, who, in several others of his works, as well as in that *de Pallio*, says every thing that comes into his head, if it be a far fetched conceit, or a bold expression ; by which he hoped to shew the vigour, (we must rather call it, the disorder) of his imagination

Malebranche's recherche de la verite. Liv. ii. p. 3. c. 3.

pressions ; and only pick out his noble sentiments, and the knowledge of antiquity.

B. What say you of St. Cyprian ? Is not his style too swelling ?

A. I think it is : and it could scarce be otherwise in his age and country. But though his language has a tang of the African roughness, and the bombast that prevailed in his days ; yet there is great force and eloquence in it. Every where we see a great soul who expresseth his sentiments in a very noble, moving manner. In some places of his works we find* affected ornaments : especially in his epistle to Donatus ; which St. Austin quotes however as a letter full of eloquence. He says that God permitted those strokes of vain oratory to fall from St. Cyprian's pen, to shew posterity how much the spirit of christian simplicity had, in his following works, retrenched the superfluous ornaments of his style ; and reduced it within the bounds of a grave and modest eloquence. This (says St. Austin) is the distinguishing character of

* *Locus enim cum die convenit ; et mulcendis sensibus, ac fovendis, ad lenes auras blandientis autumnii hortorum facies amœna consentit. Hic jucundum sermonibus diem ducere, et studentibus fabulis in divina præcepta conscientiam pectoris erudire. Ac ne colloquium nostrum arbiter profanus impediatur, aut clamor intemperans familiaris strepentis obtundatur, petamus hanc sedem. Dant secessum vicina secreta, ubi dum erratici palmitum lapsus nexibus pendulis per arundines bajulas repunt, viteam porticum frondea tecta fecerunt : bene hic studia in aures damus ; et dum in arbores, et in vites quas videmus, oblectante prospectu, oculos amœnamus, animum simul et auditus instruit, et pascit obtutus.*

Cypr. Ad Donat. Epist. ii.

all the letters that St. Cyprian wrote afterwards ; which we may safely admire and imitate, as being written according to the severest rules of religion ; though we cannot hope to come up to them without a great application. In fine, though his letter to Donatus (even in St. Austin's opinion) be too elaborately adorned ; it deserves however to be called eloquent. For, notwithstanding its many rhetorical embellishments, we cannot but perceive that a great part of the epistle is very serious and lively ; and most proper to give Donatus a noble idea of christianity. In those passages where he is very earnest, he neglects all turns of wit, and falls into a sublime and vehement strain.

B. But what do you think of St. Austin? Is he not the most * jingling quibbler that ever wrote ? Will you defend him ?

* *Missi nuncios meos omnes et sensus interiores, ut quærerem te, et non inveni, quia male quærebam. Video enim, lux mea, Deus qui illuminasti me, quia male te per illos quærebam quia tu es intus, et tamen ipsi, ubi intraveris, nesciverunt—et tamen cum Deum meum quæro, quæro nihilominus quandam lucem, quam non capit oculus ; quandam vocem super omnem vocem, quam non capit auris ; quandam odorem super omnem odorem, quem non capit naris ; quandam dulcorem super omnem dulcorem, quem non capit gestus ; quandam amplexum super omnem amplexum, quem non capit tactus. Ista lux quidem fulget ubi locus non capit : ista vox sonat, ubi spiritus non rapit : odor iste redolet, ubi flatus, non spargit : sapor iste sapit ubi non est edacitas ; amplexus iste tangitur, ubi non divellitur.*

Aug. Solil. §. 31.

O dies præclara et pulchra, nesciens vespere, non habens occasum—ubi non erit hostis impugnans, neque ulla illecebra, sed summa et certa securitas, secunda tranquillitas, et tranquilla jocunditas, jocunda felicitas, felix æternitas,

A. No; I cannot vindicate him in that. It was the reigning fault of his time; to which his quick, lively fancy naturally inclined him. This shews that he was not a perfect orator. But notwithstanding this defect, he had a great talent for persuasion. He reasoned generally with great force: and he is full of noble notions. He knew the heart of man entirely well, and was so polite, that he carefully observed the strictest decency in all his discourses. In short, he expressed himself almost always in a pathetic, gentle, insinuating manner. Now ought not the fault we observe in so great a man to be forgiven?

C. I must own there is one thing in him that I never observed in any other writer: I mean, that he has a moving way, even when he quibbles. None of his works are more full of jingling turns, than his confessions, and soliloquies: and yet we must own they are * tender, and apt to affect the reader.

A. It is because he checks the turns of his fancy as much as he can, by the ingenu-

æterna beatitudo, et beata Trinitas, et Trinitatis unitas, et unitatis Deitas, et Deitatis beata visio, quæ est gaudium Domini Dei tui.—

Aug. *Solil.* §. 35.

* Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus. Sitivit anima mea ad te Deum, fontem vivum: quando veniam et apparebo ante faciem tuam? O fons vitæ, vena aquarum viventium; quando veniam ad aquas dulcedinis tuæ de terra deserta, invia et inaquosa; ut videam virtutem tuam, et gloriam tuam, et *satiem* ex aquis misericordiæ tuæ *sitim* meam? *sitio*, Domine, fons vitæ es, *satia* me. *Sitio*, Domine, *sitio* te Deum vivum: O quando veniam et apparebo, Domine, ante faciem tuam?

Aug. *Solil.* cap. xxxv.

ous simplicity of his pious, affecting sentiments. All his works plainly shew his love of God. He was not only conscious of it; but knew well how to express to others the strong sense he had of it. Now this tender, affecting way, is a part of eloquence. But we see besides that St. Austin knew exactly all the essential rules of it. He tells us * that a persuasive discourse must be simple and natural: that art must not appear in it: and that if it be too fine and elaborate, it puts the hearers upon their guard. To this purpose he applies these words, which you cannot but remember, '*qui sophisticè loquitur odibilis est.*' He talks likewise very judiciously of the mixing different kinds of style in a discourse; of ranging the several parts of it in such a manner as to make it increase gradually in strength and evidence; of the necessity of being plain and familiar, even as to the tones of the voice, and our action in particular passages; though every thing we say should still have a dignity when we preach religion. In fine, he likewise shews the way to awaken and move people. These are St. Austin's notions of eloquence. But if you would see with how much art he actually influenced people's minds, and with what address he moved their passions, according to the true design of eloquence; you must read the account he gives of a discourse he made to the people of Cæsarea, in Mauritania, in

* De doct. Chr. l. 2.

order to abolish a barbarous practice. It seems there prevailed among them an ancient custom, which they had carried to a monstrous pitch of cruelty. His business therefore was to draw off the people from a spectacle that delighted them extremely. Judge now what a difficult enterprise this was. However, he tells us that after he had talked to them for some time, they spake aloud and applauded him. But he concluded that his discourse had not persuaded them, seeing they amused themselves in commending him. He thought he had done nothing while he only raised delight and admiration in his hearers: nor did he begin to hope for any good effect from his discourse, till he saw them weep. 'In effect,' says he, the people were at length 'prevailed on to give up this delightful spectacle: nor has it been renewed these eight years.' Is not St. Austin then a true orator? Have we any preachers that are able to talk so powerfully now? As for St. Jerom, he has some faults in his style: but his expressions are manly and great. He is not regular; but he is far more eloquent than most of those who value themselves upon their oratory. We should judge like mere grammarians if we examined only the style and language of the fathers. You know there is a great difference between eloquence, and what we call elegance, or purity, of style—St. Ambrose likewise fell into the fashionable defects of his time; and gives his discourse such ornaments

as were then in vogue. Perhaps these great men (who had higher views than the common rules of rhetoric,) conformed themselves to the prevailing taste of the age they lived in, that they might the better insinuate the truths of religion upon people's minds, by engaging them to hear the word of God with pleasure. But notwithstanding the puns and quibbles that St. Ambrose sometimes uses, we see that he wrote to Theodosius with an inimitable force and persuasion. How much tenderness does he express when he speaks of the death of his brother Satyrus? In the Roman breviary we have a discourse of his, concerning John the Baptist's head, which, he says, Herod respected and dreaded, even after his death. If you observe that discourse, you will find the end of it very sublime. St. Leo's style is swelling, but truly noble. Pope Gregory lived still in a worse age: and yet he wrote several things with much strength and dignity. We ought to distinguish those failings into which the degeneracy of arts and learning led these great men, in common with other writers of their several ages: and at the same time observe what their genius and sentiments furnished them with, to persuade their hearers.

C. But do you think then that the taste of eloquence was quite lost in those ages that were so happy for religion?

A. Yes: within a little time after the reign of Augustus, eloquence, and the Latin tongue

began to decline apace. The fathers did not live till after this corruption : so that we must not look on them as complete models. We must even acknowledge that most of the sermons they have left us are composed with less skill and force, than their other works. When I shewed you from the testimony of the fathers that the scripture is eloquent ; (which you seemed to believe upon their credit ;) I knew very well that the oratory of these witnesses, is much inferior to that of the sacred writings themselves. But there are some persons of such a depraved taste, that they cannot relish the beauties of Isaiah ; and yet they will admire Chrysologus ; in whom (notwithstanding his fine name,) there is little to be found besides abundance of evangelical piety couched under numberless quibbles, and low witticisms. In the east, the just way of speaking and writing, was better preserved : and the Greek tongue continued for some time, almost in its ancient purity. St. Chrysostom spake it very well. His style, you know, is copious ; but he did not study false ornaments. All his discourse tends to persuasion : he placed every thing with judgment ; and was well acquainted with the holy scripture, and the manners of men. He entered into their hearts ; and rendered things familiarly sensible to them. He had sublime and solid notions ; and is sometimes very affecting. Upon the whole, we must own he is a great orator. St. Gregory Nazianzen is

more concise, and more poetical ; but not quite so persuasive. And yet he has several moving passages ; particularly, in his funeral oration upon his brother St. Basil ; and in his last discourse at taking leave of Constantino-ple. St. Basil is grave, sententious, and rigid, even in his style. He had meditated profoundly on all the truths of the gospel : he knew exactly all the disorders and weaknesses of human nature ; and he had a great sagacity in the conduct of souls. There is nothing more eloquent than his epistle to a virgin that had fallen : in my opinion it is a masterpiece. But now if a preacher should not have formed his taste in these matters before he studies the fathers, he will be in danger of copying the most unaccurate parts of their works ; and may perhaps imitate their chief defects in the sermons he composes.

C. But how long continued this false eloquence which succeeded the true kind ?

A. Till now.

C. What do you mean ? Till now ?

A. Yes, till now : for we have not yet corrected our taste of eloquence, so much as we imagine. You will soon perceive the reason of it. The barbarous nations that overran the Roman empire, did spread ignorance and a bad taste every where. Now we descended from them. And though learning began to revive in the fifteenth century ; it recovered then but slowly. It was with great difficulty that we were brought by degrees to

have any relish of a right manner : and even now, how many are there who have no notion of it ? However we ought to shew a due respect not only to the fathers but to other pious authors, who wrote during this long interval of ignorance. From them we learn the traditions of their time, and several other useful instructions. I am quite ashamed of giving my judgment so freely on this point : but, gentlemen, ye desired me. And I shall be very ready to own my mistakes if any one will undeceive me. But it is time to put an end to this conversation.

C. We cannot part with you till you give us your opinion about the manner of choosing a text.

A. You know very well that the use of texts arose from the ancient custom that preachers observed, in not delivering their own reflections to the people ; but only explaining the words of the sacred text. However by degrees they came to leave off this way of expounding the whole words of the gospel that was appointed for the day ; and discoursed only upon one part of it, which they called the text of the sermon. Now if a preacher does not make an exact explication of the whole gospel, or epistle, he ought at least to choose those words that are most important ; and best suited to the wants and capacities of the people. He ought to explain them well : and to give a right notion of what is meant by a single word, it is oft-times necessary to ex-

pound many others in the context. But there should be nothing refined or far fetched in such instructions. It must look very strange and awkward in a preacher to set up for wit and delicacy of invention, when he ought to speak with the utmost seriousness and gravity ; out of regard to the authority of the Holy Spirit whose words he borrows.

C. I must confess I always disliked a forced text. Have you not observed that a preacher draws from a text, whatever sermons he pleases ? He insensibly warps and bends his subject to make the text fit the sermon that he has occasion to preach. This is frequently done in the time of Lent. I cannot approve of it.

B. Before we conclude, I must beg of you to satisfy me as to one point that still puzzles me, and after that we will let you go.

A. Come then ; let us hear what it is. I have a great mind to satisfy you if I can. For I heartily wish you would employ your parts in making plain and persuasive sermons.

B. You would have a preacher explain the holy scriptures with connexion, according to the obvious sense of them.

A. Yes : that would be an excellent method.

B. Whence then did it proceed that the fathers interpreted the scripture quite otherwise ? They usually give a spiritual, and allegorical meaning to the sacred text. Read St. Austin, St. Ambrose, St. Jerom, Origen

and others of the fathers : they find mysteries every where, and seldom regard the letter of scripture.

A. The Jews that lived in our Saviour's days abounded in these mysterious allegorical interpretations. It seems that the Therapeutæ who lived chiefly at Alexandria, (and whom Philo reckoned to be philosophical Jews, though Eusebius supposes they were primitive Christians,) were extremely addicted to these mystical interpretations. And indeed it was in the city of Alexandria that allegories began to appear with credit among Christians. Origen was the first of the fathers who forsook the literal sense of scripture. You know what disturbance he occasioned in the church. Piety itself seemed to recommend these allegorical interpretations. And besides there is something in them very agreeable, ingenious, and edifying. Most of the fathers to gratify the humour of the people (and probably their own too) made great use of them. But they kept faithfully to the literal, and the prophetic sense (which in its kind is literal too) in all points where they had occasion to shew the foundations of the Christian doctrine. When the people were fully instructed in every thing they could learn from the letter of scripture ; the fathers gave them those mystical interpretations to edify and comfort them. These explications were exactly adapted to the relish of the eastern people, among whom they first arose : for, they are naturally fond

of mysterious and allegorical language. They were the more delighted with this variety of interpretations, because of the frequent preaching, and almost constant reading of scripture, which was used in the church. But among us the people are far less instructed : we must do what is most necessary ; and begin with the literal sense ; without despising the pious explications that the fathers gave. We must take care of providing our daily bread ; before we seek after delicacies. In interpreting scripture we cannot do better than to imitate the solidity of St. Chrysostom. Most of our modern preachers do not study allegorical meanings, because they have sufficiently explained the literal sense ; but they forsake it, because they do not perceive its grandeur ; and reckon it dry and barren in comparison of their way of preaching. But we have all the truths and duties of religion in the letter of the scripture, delivered not only with authority, and a singular beauty, but with an inexhaustible variety : so that without having recourse to mystical interpretations, a preacher may always have a great number of new and noble things to say. It is a deplorable thing to see how much this sacred treasure is neglected even by those who have it always in their hands. If the clergy applied themselves to the ancient way of making homilies, we should then have two different sorts of preachers. They who have no vivacity, or a poetical genius, would explain

the scriptures clearly, without imitating its lively, noble manner : and if they expounded the word of God judiciously, and supported their doctrine by an exemplary life, they would be very good preachers. They would have what St. Ambrose requires, a chaste, simple, clear style, full of weight and gravity ; without affecting elegance, or despising the smoothness and graces of language. The other sort having a poetical turn of mind would explain the scripture in its own style and figures ; and by that means become accomplished preachers. One sort would instruct people with clearness, force, and dignity : and the other would add to this powerful instruction, the sublimity, the* en-

* Inspiration may be justly called *divine enthusiasm*—for inspiration is a *real* feeling of the *divine presence* ; and enthusiasm a false one. *Characteristics*, vol. i. p. 53.

This is what our author advances, when in behalf of *enthusiasm* he quotes its formal enemies, and shews that they are as capable of it as its greatest confessors and martyrs. So far is he from degrading *enthusiasm*, or disclaiming it in himself, that he looks on this *passion*, simply considered, as the most natural ; and its *object*, the *justest* in the world. Even *virtue* itself he takes to be no other than a noble *enthusiasm* justly directed and regulated by that high standard which he supposes in the nature of things—nor is thorough *honesty*, in his hypothesis, any other than this zeal, or passion, moving strongly upon the *species*, or view of the *decorum* and *sublime* of actions. Others may pursue different forms, and fix their eye on different species, (as all men do on one or other :) the real *honest man*, however plain or simple he appears, has that highest species, [the *honestum*, *pulchrum*, τὸ καλὸν πρέπον] *honesty* itself in view ; and, instead of outward forms or symmetries, is struck with that of inward character, the *harmony* and numbers of the *heart*, and *beauty* of the *affections*, which form the manners, and conduct of a

thusiasm, and vehemence of scripture : so that it would (if I may so say) be entire, and living in them, as much as it can be in men who are not miraculously inspired from above.

B. Oh, Sir : I had almost forgot an important article. Have a moment's patience, I beseech you : a few words will satisfy me.

A. What now ? Have you any body else to censure ?

B. Yes : the panegyrists. Do you think that when they praise a saint, they ought so to give his character, as to reduce all his actions and all his virtues to one point ?

A. That shews the orator's invention and refined sense.

B. I understand you. It seems you do not like that method.

A. I think it wrong in most cases. He must put a force upon things, who reduces them all to a single point. There are many actions of one's life that flow from divers principles, and plainly shew that he possessed very different qualities. The way of referring all the steps of a man's conduct to one cause, is but a scholastic subtilty, which shews that the orator is far from knowing human nature. The true way to draw a just character, is to paint the whole man, and to set him before

truly social life—upon the whole therefore, according to our author, *enthusiasm* is in itself, a very natural, *honest* passion, and has properly nothing for its object but what is *good and honest*.
Char. vol. iii. Miscel. 2. ch. 1.

the hearer's eyes, speaking and acting. In describing the course of his life, the preacher should chiefly point out those passages wherein either his natural temper, or his piety best appeared. But there should always be something left to the hearer's own observation. The best way of praising holy persons is to recount their laudable actions. This gives a body and force to a panegyric : this is what instructs people ; and makes an impression upon their minds. But it frequently happens that they return home without knowing any thing of a person's life, about whom they have heard an hour's discourse : or at least they have heard many remarks upon a few separate facts, related without any connexion. On the contrary a preacher ought to paint a person to the life ; and shew what he was in every period, in every condition, and in the most remarkable junctures, of his life. This could not hinder one from forming a character of him : nay it might be better collected from his actions, and his words than from general thoughts, and imaginary designs.

B. You would choose then to give the history of a holy person's life, and not make a panegyric.

A. No : you mistake me. I would not make a simple narration. I should think it enough to give a coherent view of the chief facts in a concise, lively, close, pathetic manner. Every thing should help to give a just idea of the holy person I praised ; and at the

same time to give proper instruction to the hearers. To this I would add such moral reflections, as I should think most suitable. Now do not you think that such a discourse as this would have a noble and amiable simplicity ? Do not you believe that the lives of holy people would be better understood this way, and an audience be more edified, than they generally are ? Do you not think that according to the rules of eloquence we laid down, such a discourse would even be more eloquent than those over-strained panegyrics that are commonly made ?

B. I am of opinion that such sermons as you speak of would be as instructive, as affecting, and as agreeable as any other. I am now satisfied, Sir : it is time to release you. I hope the pains you have taken with me will not be lost : for I have resolved to part with all my modern collections, and Italian wits ; and in a serious manner to study the whole connexion and principles of religion ; by tracing them back to their source.

C. Farewell, Sir : the best acknowledgment I can make, is to assure you that I will have a great regard to what you have said.

A. Gentlemen, good night. I will leave you with these words of St. Jerom to Nepotian : ‘ when you teach in the church, do not endeavour to draw applause, but rather sighs and groans from the people ; let their tears praise you. The discourses of a clergyman

should be full of the holy scripture. Be not a declaimer, but a true teacher of the mysteries of God.'

FINIS.

S. T. Armstrong, printer.

